

PETER AND PAUL
AND THEIR FRIENDS

HELEN NICOLAY



Class B5 2619

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**PETER AND PAUL
AND THEIR FRIENDS**

THE BEACON PRESS PUBLICATIONS
IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE BEACON COURSE
OF GRADED LESSONS

William I. Lawrence

Florence Buck

EDITORS.

PETER AND PAUL AND THEIR FRIENDS

A Manual for Religious Instruction

BY
HELEN NICOLAY



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EDITORS' PREFACE

The projectors of the Beacon Course in Religious Education have in mind two results which they believe will be achieved by its use. The first and most important is the development of the moral and spiritual life of the children and young people studying it, and the direction of their conduct in social relations according to the highest Christian ideals. The second result desired is the imparting of knowledge, giving the students the religious heritage that is their due, and especially such knowledge of our Scriptures as will prove fruitful in conduct and character.

To secure these results the Beacon Course uses in each of the books for pupils under twelve years old such material, chosen from the Bible and from other sources, as seems suited to the religious development of children of the age for which the book is provided. In the years from twelve to fourteen Bible material makes the basis of each of the three books offered. In these three years a rapid survey of its contents is made; first of the Old Testament, with especial attention to the religious message of the prophets, in one year; then of the New Testament in two years, presenting the life and work of Jesus in the first, and the achievements of his

followers, the founders of the Apostolic Church, in the second.

The book here offered is intended to give pupils of fourteen a glimpse at the beginnings of the Christian church. It is hoped that they may see Peter and Paul and their associates as living personalities; that they may feel the genuine interest of those who found working for the new faith a real adventure, and that, through association with the vital religious experience of these early Christians, their own religious life may be deepened and made more ardent.

We believe that this book in the course will be found to combine, in a quite unique way, the later New Testament material which we want the pupils to know with the life-values which furnish the reason why we want them to know it.

THE EDITORS

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

The writer still bears scars of lost Sundays in her childhood, when the vivid Bible stories were drained of their vitality by well-meaning instructors; saints and sinners alike being reduced to a procession of gray, ineffective ghosts.

Years later, confronted with a class of her own, she resolved that however ill-equipped she might be for teaching, one thing at least she could do, try to convince her group of young people that these men and women of an alien race and time were no mere ghosts, but strong rich personalities, or they could never have survived the centuries, with the wear and tear of the written word, and all the mutilating effects of translation. She would try to show, furthermore, that they were not only very much alive, but had to struggle with precisely the same moral and material problems which confront us to-day; and that this is the reason the study of their lives and characters may be of absorbing interest, here and now.

Not having a scholar's knowledge of the period, and therefore no means of deciding for herself which letters ascribed to Paul are to be considered genuine, or indeed a single point of nice Biblical criticism, she has depended for these matters on the judgment

and scholarship of those who have read the manuscript. She has taken help avidly, wherever she could find it, in a fashion little short of piratical. She hopes the cause may condone the offense. Gentlemanly pirates sometimes thanked their victims. Venturing to be as mannerly as they, she wishes to make acknowledgment to all who have helped her; particularly to Dr. William I. Lawrance, Dr. Florence Buck, and Dr. Clayton R. Bowen, who have read her manuscript and dealt most patiently with its errors.

H. N.

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RULES THE TEACHER MADE FOR HERSELF

Being convinced that people grow up "in spots," and that the spots are never the same in any two individuals, the first rule made was to assume that teacher and pupils were of the same intellectual age, studying the lesson together. The answer of a clever Southern mother when complimented on the delightful manners of her fifteen-year old son at a tea party, furnished the text: "O, he is charmed at being treated like a grown man. We always hid the candy when he came into the room. You are passing it to him!"

Rule number one, therefore, was: *Treat the class as mental equals. Always pass the sweets instead of hiding them.* If an allusion missed fire, or it was evident that it had not been understood, a word of explanation was added; but the class was given the benefit of the doubt. An occasional opportunity for instruction may have been lost; but it was more than balanced by quickened interest and the effort of the entire class to live up to the intellectual standard required of it.

Rule number two was: *Make each pupil feel the importance of regular attendance.* To this end, no textbook other than the Bible is provided for the class. This manual is for the teacher. The idea is

to portion out the lesson in such a way that each pupil brings to class something the others have not, thus adding an essential bit to the whole.

Loose-leaf notebooks of rather large size are suggested as a way of garnering these bits and making a permanent record.

Though the course must necessarily be considered as a whole and its general sequence should remain unchanged, some temporary or local happening may make it advisable to take a lesson out of the prescribed order. For instance: while she was conducting another course a few years ago, the problem of how to present the story of Christ stilling the waves caused the teacher no little trepidation in advance. A strong three-days' gale, plus a newspaper paragraph, read almost at the moment of starting for Sunday school, settled the matter. The paragraph stated that a certain estuary of the lower Potomac was behaving very much as the Red Sea behaved in Pharaoh's day. The lesson already prepared was temporarily thrust aside; a hasty glance through the Old Testament showed what a dramatic part wind had played in the lives of a nomadic people, and all led up to the trust and serenity displayed by Jesus when his terrified companions awoke him. The newspaper paragraph made a very convincing link between Bible times and our own day; and the problem of getting all the pupils to take part was solved by having them read in turn the dramatic Old Testament incidents alluded to above.

In short, instructing a class is very like making a

water-color sketch. Unforeseen accidents are sure to happen. It is up to the teacher to take advantage of these, and make good use of them.

There is another way in which the rules of the graphic arts are helpful in this adventure of instructing a class. Not only is it necessary to keep the sequence of the whole course in mind, with its historical setting, its introduction, its climax, and its conclusion; each lesson in itself should be regarded as a similar unit, though forming part of the greater whole. Every successful picture has its centre of interest toward which the eye is inevitably though often insensibly led. In like manner, each lesson, to "carry" well, must be built around one central idea which remains from the first clear and distinct in the mind of the teacher.

A third rule, applicable alike to the making of pictures and to interesting minds old or young, wise or foolish, may be summed up in three words: *Keep them guessing*. To look at a whole roomful of pictures painted in the same key invites weariness. A whole book of short stories written in the same vein becomes tiresome. To conduct lessons in exactly the same way for thirty-seven consecutive Sundays would be little short of a crime.

The suggestions given are based upon the assumption that the class consists of eight pupils, which may be considered an average number. If the class becomes larger, some of the questions may be given to two pupils, and a friendly rivalry thus fostered, to see which can bring in the better answer.

12 RULES THE TEACHER MADE

The outline for each lesson is given in merest skeleton, to be clothed and made alive by the teacher, with the help of the pupils themselves.

As few or as many hours may be devoted to the work of preparation as other demands upon the time of the teacher permit. The more the better, and—we say it fearlessly though with reverence—the merrier. Since cheerfulness is one of the Christian virtues, smiles and laughter need not be banished from the classroom.

If remembrance of the class be carried permanently in a convenient mental niche, near at hand, but never obtrusively in the way, an astonishing number of incidents and bits of reading will be found to fit in with the needs of one lesson or another in the course of the year. Half a dozen large envelopes, suitably inscribed, into which such miscellaneous treasure-trove—references, quotations, notes to recall personal encounters or experiences, bits of poetry, pictures—may be thrust at the moment of discovery to wait “until called for,” will appreciably reduce the labor of preparing the lessons.

Obviously it is a great thing to become acquainted with the pupils; and if the teacher can afford time for outside meetings with the class, such events will be found mutually helpful. The writer has personally solved the problem by setting aside the first Saturday afternoon in each month for a class party. Sometimes the class meets at her home for a marshmallow roast, or to prepare for some church fes-

tivity. Sometimes all foregather at a museum or similar place of interest, and after a prowl among its treasures adjourn to a convenient spot for "tea," which is usually spelled i-c-e c-r-e-a-m on the order blank, the guests being young and fond of sweets. The danger is that such parties may become a tax upon the purse, since the temptation is ever present to do "nice" things. The subjugation of this desire is not a bad moral exercise for the teacher. As for the young people, bless them, ingenuity and good fellowship have a value in their eyes far above cash.

While the object of such parties is purely social, some of the most successful have proved helpful in the lessons also. One, deliberately arranged for that purpose early in the season in which this course of lessons was given, was devoted to reading aloud the greater part of Bulwer's *Last Days of Pompeii*, condensed and arranged beforehand. Only one member of the class was familiar with it, and it thrilled all, as romantic tales thrill at that age, while it depicted in masterly fashion the region and period and kind of life into which Paul, the chief hero of the winter's study, was time and again to penetrate. More than once a reference to some description or incident in the story called up a mental picture which rendered unnecessary ten minutes of explanation. And minutes are so few, in the lesson periods, for all we want to crowd into them!

CHIEF EVENTS OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE

(Taken from *A Short History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age* by George Holley Gilbert.)

- 27 or 30 A. D. Death of Jesus. Pentecost
- 32 A. D. Conversion of Paul
- 32–35 A. D. Paul in Arabia and Damascus
- 35–44 A. D. Paul in Syria and Cilicia
- 44 A. D. Planting of the church in Antioch
- 45–47 A. D. Paul's first missionary journey
- 48 A. D. The conference at Jerusalem
- 49–51 A. D. Paul's second missionary journey
- 52–56 A. D. Paul's third missionary journey
- 56–58 A. D. Paul's two years' imprisonment in Cæsarea
- 58–59 A. D. Paul's voyage to Rome
- 59–61 A. D. Paul's two years' imprisonment in Rome
- 64 A. D. Death of Paul
 - The death of Peter probably occurred about this time.
- 70 A. D. Destruction of Jerusalem
- 64–100 A. D. A period of relative obscurity. The gospels, Revelation, and several New Testament letters were written; but of external events little is known.

PART I

PETER AND SOME OTHER APOSTLES

LESSON I

GEOGRAPHY AND SCOPE OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE

(Acts 1: 1-14)

The first two or three Sundays must necessarily be devoted to getting acquainted, and to settling down to work. The first lesson period cannot be put to better use than in showing the pupils, with the aid of a map and our table of contents, just what the winter's course of study proposes to cover.

Lay stress on the romance of this first century of the Christian era, a time of brave men and savage deeds.

Compare the tiny territory of Palestine with the extent of the then known world. Recall how Palestine was a subject province of powerful and mighty Rome; and how, in Palestine, the Christians were only a small, weak and despised handful of people whose leader had been executed as a common criminal. Yet, in a few short years—half a lifetime if we use the Psalmist's measure of three-score years and ten—the truths Jesus taught were heard on practically all the shores of the Mediterranean, which was a much larger proportion of “the world” then than now.

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We are to study the way in which this came about. It makes a wonderful continued story full of thrilling adventure. Peter is the hero of the first part of the tale: Paul of the second part.

The hints which follow show the wide range of fact and legend from which we may choose in presenting our hasty survey of a field thirty-five years long and two thousand miles broad. Any good encyclopædia or "golden treasury" can extend it indefinitely. School work in Latin and history has already given these young people a wholesome conception of the power of Rome and the culture that came from Greece. It would be neglecting opportunity if we failed to call these to our aid. We should dwell even more upon the picturesque, courageous lives of these men who followed the dictates of their conscience, regardless of Convention, or Power, or half a dozen other worldly dragons whose names are spelled with capital letters,—and who "won out," with the help of God, against amazing odds.

The winter's work should be presented as the study of a great and romantic adventure.

SUGGESTIONS

THE MINISTRY OF JESUS was limited to an area 100 miles north and south by 50 east and west. It was limited in time to two or three years at most.

THE MINISTRY OF THE APOSTLES covered an area 2000 miles east and west by 700 north and south, and

occupied a little more than thirty years; approximately the length of Christ's whole life.

It moved along the Mediterranean coast north toward Antioch, west and northwest to Troas and Philippi, and south to Corinth. That of which we have record is confined chiefly to four large cities: Ephesus, Corinth, Jerusalem, and Antioch on the River Orontes. (Antioch was a common name for towns of Greek origin. There were five in Syria alone.) Record has also come down to us of the work in seven lesser cities of which four were in Asia Minor. These were Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. The other three were in Greece: Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. From these spots Christianity spread into the surrounding regions. (Acts 14: 6-7 and 19: 10)

CHRIST'S DISCIPLES. Very little is known about their after history. The Bible does not even mention the greater part of them again. It tells us much about Peter, the most famous of them all, but the New Testament contains no record of his death. Nor indeed does it contain a syllable about the death of Paul. Tradition places both these events in the time of the persecution of the Christians under Nero, 64-67 A. D. Tradition puts the death of John later, under Trajan; he probably died under Nero or soon after.

ASIA was at that time the name of a comparatively small territory, the first Roman province east of the *Ægean Sea*. It had been left to Rome by the will of Attalus Third in 133 B. C.

ANTIOCH. From its epithet "the Golden" we may infer that it was a wonderful and wealthy city. It considered itself the rival of Alexandria. West of it lay the far-famed sacred grove of Daphne. It was at Antioch that the name Christian first came into use.

CRETE. An island of snow-covered mountains, orange trees, caves, and deep ravines. Fabled home of the Minotaur, which fed on a yearly tribute of youths and maidens from Athens. Crete also was the reputed birthplace of Zeus. The island's freedom from venomous serpents was "a privilege popularly ascribed to the intercession of Titus, companion of Paul." Geographically, Crete has been called the "natural stepping-stone between Greece and Egypt."

CYPRUS. Rich in copper and silver. Was coveted for that reason, and calmly annexed by Rome, on the pretence that its ruler connived at piracy.

COURAGE OF THE APOSTLES. Note the splendid courage of the men who carried the gospel of Jesus into strange lands. In a way it requires more courage to be an apostle than the founder of a new faith.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

Do hazards and handicaps add zest to an undertaking?

Conviction that one is right as a spur to effort.

LESSON MOTTO

“Never knew I so high adventure”

—From introduction to *King Arthur's Adventure*.

LESSON II

HOPE DAWNS FOR THE BEREAVED DISCIPLES

(Acts 1:15-26)

The opening chapter of this marvelous continued story is one of sorrow, written in a minor key, which changes even while we watch and listen.

Christ had been crucified between thieves, the throng jeering, the Roman soldiers on guard at the place of execution mocking him, a little knot of stricken women watching afar off. His faithful friends were denied even the comfort of performing the last sad offices for the dead. (Ask the members of the class to imagine themselves present on that dreadful day. "You as So-and-so, you as This-one, you, a little lame boy Christ had helped." It will not require all the amplifications of the picture developed by later story-tellers to make the class realize the sadness and despair which shut down upon the disciples.) There seemed to be absolutely nothing left of a beautiful friendship and a wonderful hope, except sorrow and broken promises.

The small band of followers returned to their homes and took up their old tasks, trying to fill their

days and nights as they had been filled before Jesus came into their lives. Soon they found this to be impossible. They were reminded of him at every turn. They seemed to see him in the places where he had taught. The homely articles he had immortalized in story and parable spoke of him. Even the prosaic act of taking food to sustain life had gained now dignity and sanctity through the use he made of it. They began to realize that one so constantly with them could not be *dead*. Some were even persuaded that they saw him with their bodily eyes and heard his voice, receiving new commands from him. Let us refresh our memory by turning to the last chapters of Luke and John. (The class may be called upon to read aloud the different instances recorded in Luke 24: 13-51 and in John 20: 19-29 and 21: 1-4.)

What the friends and disciples of Jesus really saw with their bodily eyes is of little moment. They had learned the great spiritual truth that he was as much alive as he had ever been: that death, which had claimed his body, had not touched *him*. As Peter said, (Acts 2:24) "It was not possible that he should be holden of it."

Much comforted, they reasoned that since he was not dead, it behooved his disciples to act as though he were still with them, and to do everything in their power to carry out his wishes. By talking and praying together the little band in Jerusalem gained renewed confidence; and Peter, practical and impulsive, suggested that they strengthen and perfect

their organization by choosing a new apostle to fill the place made vacant by Judas. He was persuaded that if they did this and waited trustfully for guidance their next step would be made plain to them. (Read in class Acts 1:15-26.) Choice was made by the good old-fashioned Jewish method of casting lots, after asking God to indicate his will.

SUGGESTIONS

CHOICE OF MATTHIAS. G. H. Gilbert says, "This act showed that the bereaved disciples had regained their presence of mind, and realized they had a mission to perform."

Both Matthias and Joseph Justus had been members of the band that accompanied with Jesus and his Twelve during his lifetime. Though neither of them has been mentioned by name in the Bible before, it is evident both were men of tried worth. Late and wholly fabulous tradition ascribes the authorship of several books to Matthias, and places the scene of his activity in "the city of Cannibals" in Ethiopia. Clement of Alexandria quotes two sayings from the books ascribed to him. The first, "Wonder at all things before you," suggests not only that wonder is the first step toward acquiring knowledge, but that the author had the trustful, loving, interested mind of "a little child" that Jesus so highly commended. The other saying, "If an elect man's neighbor sin, the elect man has sinned," is very modern in its recognition of personal and

civic responsibility. One might imagine it a new utterance, printed in one of the journals devoted to social work.

PHOTOGRAPHS of famous old pictures of the crucifixion, the entombment, the miraculous draught of fishes, etc., may be shown in class; and if practicable, smaller copies obtained for pasting in the notebooks. The great libraries have fine collections of large photographs, which may be borrowed, just as books are, to be shown on a given day.

A modern pen-picture of the old subject may be found in Josephine Preston Peabody's poem, *The Fishers*. It opens with a description of the night of fruitless toil;

“Yea, we have toiled all night. All night
We kept the boats, we cast the nets.
Nothing avails; the tides withhold,
The sea hears not—and God forgets.”

The speaker is one of the fishers, who does not at first recognize the one who questions him; who indeed resents his interference; and burst out:

“Thou Wanderer from land to land,
Say who Thou art to bid us strive
Once more against the eternal sea,
That loves to take strong men alive.

Lo, we stand fast, and we endure,
But trust not Thou the sea we know—
Mighty of bounty and of hate—
Slayer and friend, with ebb and flow.

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Thou hast not measured strength as we
Sea-faring men that toil and yet—
Once more—once more—at Thy strange word—
Master, we will let down the net!"'

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

Influence of the absent. A mother's influence does not cease when she leaves the room.

Recall the scene in *The Bluebird* when the dead awake and live again as often as the living think of them.

Responsibility for our neighbors.

LESSON MOTTO

"There are no dead!"

—Maeterlinck, *The Bluebird*.

LESSON III

PENTECOST

(Acts 2:1-42)

Open the lesson with an account of the three great Jewish feasts, Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, at which every man of the nation was expected to appear before the Lord with thanksgiving and not to come empty-handed.

Jesus had observed every ordinance of the Jewish religion, and had gone to his death rather than absent himself from Jerusalem at the time of the Passover. He never tried to found a new religion; what he wished to do was to simplify and make beautiful the old one. His followers considered themselves good Jews; so, when the feast of Pentecost, or First Fruits, came round, fifty days after his death, all who were within reach gathered at Jerusalem for the festival, as good Jews should. While it was doubtless hard for some of them to revisit the scene of Christ's trial so soon, it was made very much easier by the assurance they had received that his spirit was still alive and potent. Luke tells us (24:53) that they were "continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." They also had private gatherings for prayer. The former

was the act of devout Jews. In the latter and more intimate way, they met as followers of Jesus.

It is easy to imagine the company, simple, earnest, and devout,—and expectant. In choosing Matthias to be one of the apostles, and in comforting and encouraging each other they had done all they could do by themselves; now they were waiting for direction as to what to do next. Acts 1:15 gives the number of people thus gathered as a hundred and twenty.

Good old Isaac Watts wrote that “Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do.” There is a good deal of truth in it; but it is quite as true that God will supply work for hands eager and waiting to take it up.

To this day the Catholic and Episcopal churches celebrate, fifty days after Easter, a festival which they call Whitsunday. It is the season for baptism, for white dresses, signifying purity; and in Catholic churches, particularly in Europe, for quaint mediæval customs, such as letting down a dove, or balls of fire, or a shower of rose leaves in front of the altar. These are all very childish things in themselves, but are beautiful and poetic when used as symbols of the wonderful thing which happened.

What did happen? Let us read Acts 2:1-42, picturing in our minds the devout, expectant band.

No wonder that after this whirlwind revelation of enthusiasm and latent power, Peter jumped to his feet and made his great speech, as a result of which

a large number (Acts says about three thousand) of those who heard him were baptized.

SUGGESTIONS

PASSOVER was held in the early spring. It commemorated the escape of the Israelites from Egypt.

PENTECOST or the *Feast of Weeks* came seven weeks or fifty days later. It also commemorated the escape from Egypt; and in addition was supposed to be held on the anniversary of the day upon which Moses received the tablets of the Law; but its main significance was as a feast of first fruits, coming when the first corn was ready for the sickle.

TABERNACLES, the third great Jewish festival, held under tents or green arbors, to commemorate the forty years' wandering in the wilderness, was celebrated as is our Thanksgiving, after the harvest had been safely garnered.

CHRIST'S DEATH had occurred at the time of the first festival. This manifestation came at the second. Do not overlook the beauty and symbolism of this. Quote Paul (1 Cor. 15: 20) that Christ became the *first fruits* of them that slept.

TONGUES OF FLAME. If the literal-minded in the class are disturbed by this, it is a good place to sound the note which must be struck again and again: that the Bible is the literature of an Eastern race given to poetic imagery of expression; and to point out that we, ourselves, practical as we are, can

only express mental or spiritual experiences by using words whose literal meaning is very different. For example, we assert that something "opened our eyes" yet nobody for a moment thinks that we had been running around before that with our physical eyes closed.

SPEAKING WITH TONGUES will have to be dealt with, but should not be dwelt upon. Let it be reserved and treated more at length in Lesson 14. Possibly the best application and explanation in a few words is to call to mind the quickening power of enthusiasm which we have all observed and felt. We see and hear an animated person full of his subject. He may be a foreigner, speaking in his native tongue, but his enthusiasm and kindling eye, and the glow upon his face, make us feel that we fully understand him despite the barrier of language, though we comprehend his words very imperfectly.

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

MODERN INSTANCES OF SUCH QUICKENING POWER. One of the most striking is Lincoln's famous "Lost Speech" delivered at Bloomington, Ill., in 1856, before a convention called to organize a new political party opposed to slavery. Many speeches had been made before he rose. He stood a moment silent, a curious introspective look in his eyes; then he began to speak, slowly, almost hesitatingly at first, in a voice somewhat shrill. Soon however his words

began to flow steadily and smoothly on. His tones came under perfect control. His eyes flashed and glowed. With his head thrown back, his great frame towering to its full height, his face, full of emotion, illumined as though by a lamp from within, he looked like a man inspired. And like a man inspired he carried his audience with him as he denounced the evil they had to fight, ending in an impassioned appeal to all who loved justice to

“Come as the winds come when forests are rended,
Come as the waves come when navies are stranded”

and unite to put down this great wrong.

It was Lincoln’s touch of pentecostal flame. Before that day he had held honorable place in his party. After it, he was the destined leader of a great nation, the liberator of an oppressed race.

This thing happened in our own country, within memory of men still alive. Remembering it, we feel very near to the gathering in Jerusalem, and very sure that God still works his miracles, using for them earnest men and women who desire to do his will.

LESSON MOTTO

“Priests, by the imposition of a mightier hand.”

—Macaulay.

LESSON IV

THE BEGGAR AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE (Acts 3:1-11)

Soon the Apostles had proof that the power which came upon them on the day of Pentecost was no mere evanescent enthusiasm, but a very real and holy thing.

Use as the lesson the third chapter of Acts and so much of the fourth chapter as is necessary to make the picture complete; for example, verse 22. Devote most of the time to Acts 3:1-11, but dwell at the end upon Peter's quick wit in seeing and seizing upon this as the psychological moment for another sermon; upon his kindly way of interpreting the events which led up to Christ's death (Acts 3:17) and to the fearlessness of the answer he and John made when the authorities forbade them to teach in the name of Jesus. (Acts 4:18-20)

What the writer meant by "this miracle of healing" (Acts 4:22) deserves consideration here, and also what the class members might mean if they used the word. Do they think the writer meant that some unusual power was given to Peter and John? Where did that power come from? Does anything

like this seem to happen now? Is the difference really in what happens, or in the way people think and talk about events?

Perhaps it will be easier to understand our Bible, if we learn to wonder more over great achievements in our own time. A thousand cripples are healed today where one was then, and we almost forget to be surprised that the skill of man may learn and apply the laws of God in so wonderful a way.

The temple, in which the scene of this lesson is set, was the center of the community life as well as the religious life of the city of Jerusalem. Set on a high hill, it looked from the city streets "like a mountain covered with snow." At one end of the great Court of the Gentiles was the Royal Porch, a broad covered arcade with columns; at right angles to it was Solomon's Porch, almost a thousand feet long, where the learned rabbis used to meet their pupils for lectures and instruction. Inside this great enclosure was the temple proper, rising in steps and marble terraces. The balcony had carved upon its low wall notices in Greek warning Gentiles to go no farther on pain of death. The Women's Court came next; and beyond, up fifteen steps, the Inner Court for the men of Israel. Beyond that again, still higher, was the part of the temple reserved for the priests alone.

The light, striking upon the gilded porch, "dazzled like the sun's own rays." The gates, covered with precious metal, were offerings made by rich and grateful individuals, just as stained glass

windows are in our own churches. The gate called Beautiful was of Corinthian brass, the gift of a certain Nicanor. The Jews had a passionate affection for this wonderful temple, and believed that nowhere else could God be worshiped so acceptably. Beggars lay near the gates, hoping for alms from those who went in and out; and in certain parts of the enclosure merchants had established themselves to sell the articles used in sacrifice. The Beautiful Gate, at the entrance to the Court of the Men of Israel, is the setting for the incident chosen for this lesson.

SUGGESTIONS

THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM. To make the setting of the lesson seem real begin with a description of the temple, with its plan before you, and also a map of Jerusalem to show its relation to the city, and its position upon a height. There is an outline map in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* which can easily be traced, the hills and depressions indicated by a bit of shading, and made to serve very well. Possibly one of the pupils can bring this map as his or her contribution to the lesson. Go into considerable detail about the temple, its size, location, and appearance.

As the temple was described in the lessons of the preceding year on the life of Jesus, and a plan of it made part of the notebook work, it will be well to test the knowledge of the class about it. Try to see,

yourself, and help them to see, this temple in a vivid mental picture.

PETER. After the description of the temple, and reading the first verse of Acts 3, give a short character sketch of Peter, now the leader of the Apostles. His warm, impulsive nature; seeming inspired at times, then again blundering and sinning like a little child, but always, like a child, pulling himself up after one of these tumbles to press on and try again.

Go on with the rest of the story, having the pupils read the verses.

WHAT PETER DID was to instill courage, to awaken in the beggar the joy of living. In doing that he doubtless received strength himself to meet the crisis of the riot and disturbance which seemed to be his only immediate reward for his act of healing.

THE SEQUEL TO THE STORY. Teacher should read and have fresh in mind Acts 4:1-31 and Acts 5:12-42.

PETER'S SERMON. Charles Foster Kent, in *Work and Teaching of the Apostles*, pp. 34-35, shows the great importance of this sermon in the work of spreading Christianity.

CUBIT. In talking about the temple very likely this measure will come up. Some mathematical enthusiast may insist on knowing how long it was. It appears to have been a common unit of measurement among ancient peoples, but one which varied with the time and locality by as much as a hand's breadth. The temple of Herod appears to have

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been built by the newer scale which was adopted by the Jews to conform to Roman measurements. This was about 18 inches long,—17.4 inches to be exact.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

Instilling courage.

How to awaken in a cripple (not necessarily a physical cripple) the joy of living.

Receiving life and strength “more abundantly.”

TO BE MEMORIZED

Peter's answer to the lame beggar. Acts 3:6.

LESSON MOTTO

“Life . . . more abundantly.” John 10:10.

PLANS FOR FUTURE LESSONS

By this time it may not be amiss to suggest that the teacher has been doing too much of the talking and to propose that each member of the class conduct the lesson in turn, the subject being assigned a week in advance. If this is done, assurance should be given by the teacher that the students are to be allowed *carte blanche* in the method of presentation, but that the teacher will "stand by," and if desired give help and advice in the preparation.

If there happens to be any feeling of latent criticism, this offers a perfectly legitimate and friendly outlet for "self-expression," a disease of youth with which some of the class may already be smitten.

Even if the pupils have not yet reached that uncomfortable stage of growing up, they may be—doubtless should be—eager and curious to try experiments and do things themselves. Those who demur will be the shy and backward ones who will profit by being urged to make the effort.

At any rate the experiment can do no harm. As tried by the author it distinctly stimulated interest in the class. A. was anxious to see how B. would do it; and C. took mental notes, rejoicing that they need not be put immediately into practice.

At times it was a little trying to the teacher to remain silent while some good point was slurred over or missed entirely; but the student presen-

tation was soon over, as a rule, after which there was time to review and line up the things omitted. When a student came asking help in preparation the result was better acquaintance, and "team-work" helpful to both.

Obviously, much depends upon the *personnel* of the class. With another group it might be better not to continue this plan through successive Sundays, but to reserve it for certain lessons particularly dramatic in character, and to assign these as they are reached, taking care that every student has a chance in the course of the year.

In case this second course is followed, the problem of getting the students to do more of the talking may be solved by adopting at this time the plan which would naturally be followed later in case the students conduct the lesson on successive Sundays.

The second plan we called:

MAKING A MOSAIC OF THE LESSON

Assuming that the class has been conducted by the pupils in turn, the teacher will very likely be asked whether the same plan is to be followed for another round.

Since the novelty has worn off, it is well to answer "No." But all have had a taste of doing the talking themselves, and will hardly care to retreat again into the *rôle* of mere listeners. Certainly the teacher does not wish them to do so.

So the difficulty is surmounted by making a mosaic

of the lesson. It is prepared a week in advance by the teacher, who cuts into strips, each containing one question, the sheet on which the eight questions for the succeeding lesson are printed. In this Manual a number in black-faced type indicates where each question is to be considered, and warns the teacher to draw out this information from the pupil who has the question bearing that number.

The numbered slips are distributed by chance; rather ostentatiously by chance. When time for the lesson comes, the teacher begins and carries it on until Number One is reached. Here the member of the class who has drawn question Number One is called upon to take up the story. If it seems necessary to do so, the teacher supplements, then continues until Number Two is reached, and so on.

In this way each student brings something individually his own to the class, and in addition to natural curiosity to find out how that particular bit fits into the mosaic, a feeling of responsibility is fostered, which is not without its effect in keeping up regular attendance.

In case a pupil is absent, this plan offers a perfectly natural excuse for a note from the teacher, enclosing the slip for the following Sunday and showing that the absence has been commented upon.

The questions will, of course, be varied at the discretion of the teacher. Those given with the succeeding lessons are simply "samples" which have been used. They are intentionally made easy in the belief that it is not good policy or indeed right to

require too much effort on the part of high-school students who are busy with their books all the week.

They do the best they can, and are likely to come to class so bubbling with a desire to tell what they have found out that it is difficult to keep back the information until that part of the lesson is reached where it will prove most effective.

LESSON V

“ALL THINGS IN COMMON”

(Acts 5:1-11; 6:1-7)

Success brings its own problems and temptations. The number of converts grew; but the difficulty of ministering to their needs increased also. Most of them were so very poor that the problem of feeding them became a serious matter. Also, as numbers increased, it became more difficult to control the baser passions of human nature, which had been temporarily stilled, but by no means banished, when the converts turned Christian.

Before considering the way the early group of disciples lived by sharing their possessions, it may be well to recall how Jesus and his little band of followers managed their affairs. (1) Some light on this is given in such passages as Mark 6:8, Luke 8:1-3; 9:3.

(2) Use Acts 4:32-35 to show how these people tried to live literally as Christ and his small band had lived. Acts 4:36-37 gives the story of Barnabas selling his field; and Acts 5:1-11, the story of Ananias and Sapphira.

Soon Peter and the other leaders found that they had not time to attend to the physical in addition to the spiritual welfare of these people. The hours

were not long enough to listen to complaints that were made against one person or another by those who felt they were not being treated fairly in the distribution of goods or in the portions of food which were served out to them at the common table. So the leaders called together the whole body of believers and bade them choose seven men to concern themselves with the temporal affairs of the church. (3) (Acts 6:1-7) After these deacons (as they were later called) were appointed, things went more smoothly for a time. They called on others to assist them when further help became necessary, and found that women could be most useful in such ways, particularly the childless widows, who at that time were looked upon with scorn if not actually despised, and were treated with little respect. To such women the new sect of Christians proved a veritable haven of refuge. Here they found friendship, and, better still, work to do. As a French writer has said: "They could bind black shawls about their heads and become women of influence, useful, and loved like mothers."

But willing hands were not enough. Money was needed in those days to buy the necessaries of life, just as it is now. Some of the richer converts were moved to donate all their wealth toward a fund to defray current expenses. (4) Use Story of Barnabas here. (Acts 4:36-37) (5) Probably only a few did this. (6) If it had been a common practice, the gift made by Barnabas would not have been recorded in such detail, nor would it have moved

Ananias and Sapphira to act as they did. (7) Read Acts 6:1-11, and (8) consider in what their sin consisted.

SUGGESTIONS

ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA. Envious of the praise Barnabas received, they wished to emulate him, but when the actual test came, greed made it impossible for them to give up their property. So they tried to cheat God and their neighbors. In homely phrase they wanted to eat their cake and have it too,—an experiment which never succeeds. Had they given the portion of their goods frankly as a portion, no fault could have been found with them.

The Bible narrative is so condensed that it is by no means certain retribution followed so swiftly as at first appears. Nor does it matter. The story is perfect in its way, and by much re-telling has crystallized into a parable for and about evil-doers.

LOVE OF MONEY A ROOT OF EVIL. Money in itself is entirely impersonal. You can buy food or medicine or poison with the same coin. “Money answereth all things.” (Eccl. 10:19) Refer to the story of Judas, who betrayed his Master for money. Old chronicles of explorations in Virginia have much to say about wampum, the money of the Indians. One of them describes this shell-currency as “Baubles of no worth, which yet occasion as much dissension among the Savages as gold and silver among the Christians.”

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F. G. Peabody, in his *Religious Education of an American Citizen*, p. 97, tells about a passenger upon a steamboat which was wrecked. He was found later at the bottom of the sea, with a money-belt, heavy with gold, about his waist. "Now, as he was sinking, had he the gold, or had the gold him?"

CHRIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARD MONEY. "Show me the tribute money." (Matt. 22:19) He always made it clear that the wonderful gift of eternal life was one which could be had "without money and without price."

PICTURES. In the large collections of photographs before mentioned a few curious ones representing the story of Ananias and Sapphira may be found. Titian's "Tribute Money" is well worth using.

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Noblesse oblige,—the law of liberty which Ananias and his wife did not fulfil.

TO BE MEMORIZED

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal. 6:7.

LESSON MOTTO

"Let your *turn of mind* be free from the *love of money*."
Heb. 13:5.

QUESTIONS, LESSON V

1.

Can you tell us how Jesus and his little band of personal followers managed their affairs. Like other people they had to live and to eat. You will find hints in Mark 6:8; Luke 8: 1-3; 9 :3.

2.

I shall ask you to read aloud in class Acts 4: 32-35 to give us an idea of the way in which the early Christians tried to carry on their daily lives.

3.

Tell us why it was found necessary to choose deacons, and the way it was done. Acts 6:1-7.

4.

Most of the early Christians were poor. Some of the wealthier ones gave money for the support of the rest. Read us about the gift made by Barnabas, Acts 4: 36-37.

5.

Tell us what you can find out about Barnabas, who is mentioned in Acts 4: 36-37. We may meet him again. Look in the encyclopædia.

6.

Read the story of Barnabas, Acts 4: 36-37, and tell us whether you think all the early Christians were as generous. If they had been, would this particular gift have been recorded with such detail?

7.

Please read aloud in class the story of Ananias and Sapphira. Acts 5: 1-11.

8.

Tell us why you think Ananias and his wife, whose story is told in Acts 5: 1-11, were so severely dealt with. Just what was their sin?

LESSON VI

THE MARTYRDOM OF STEPHEN

(Acts 6:7-15; 7: 57-60)

The names of the seven deacons were Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas. Fortunately, we do not have to burden our minds by remembering all of them. But we must not forget the first two, Stephen and Philip, for these developed great gifts as preachers, bidding fair, as time went on, to eclipse even Peter himself. There was no jealousy, however, only a friendly division of labor. The men who could preach, preached, while others took up the task of looking after the welfare of the church in a physical way. So, a year or two went by.

(1) Stephen, the most brilliant of them all, "a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," (Acts 6: 5) may have been of Greek origin. If so, he naturally preached to people of Greek birth or training. (2) (Read Acts 6:8,10) But the things he said displeased certain people who were looked upon in the community as most reputable citizens. (Read Acts 6: 9) (3) Very possibly he quoted that saying of Jesus recorded in Mark 13:2. "Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone

upon another that shall not be thrown down." To men who venerated the temple as these did, such a speech appeared little short of sacrilege. (4) Among the Jews who listened and resented his words was one very young but very earnest and very gifted rabbi named Saul of Tarsus, or Paul, to give his name the form by which we know it best. He had only lately come from home to study in Jerusalem, under a famous teacher named Gamaliel, but he had forged ahead so rapidly that he was already prominent in temple circles. He had no patience with the Christians, and we may be sure that he took full part in the denunciation of Stephen. (Read Acts 6:11-15)

Then, his face still shining with enthusiasm "as it had been the face of an angel," Stephen made a great speech, which is given at length in the seventh chapter of Acts. (5) To us it seems a strange sort of discourse, which rambles all through Jewish history; but to men of Hebrew training it was full of significance. They were used to this elaborate symbolic way of treating their national history. The main point for us lies in Stephen's assertion that in all the forty years of wandering in the wilderness his nation had no permanent temple, yet continued to worship and to find favor in the sight of God. (6) "Solomon built him a house" he said. "Howbeit, the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands. As saith the Prophet," he continued, quoting the 66th chapter of Isaiah, "Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool; what

house will ye build me . . . or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hands made all these things?"

Indignant Jewish theologians did not relish being refuted by the words of their own sacred writers, and Stephen was not allowed to finish. (7) When he began to accuse them of persecuting the prophets, and of breaking the spirit of the law, his own doom was sealed.

(8) End the lesson by having the pupils read Acts 7: 54-60 and 8: 1-4.

SUGGESTIONS

STEPHEN WAS THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR. Perhaps that is the reason his "day" in the saints' calendar of the Catholic church is December 26, as near as possible to Christmas.

THE GREEK MEANING OF STEPHEN'S NAME is "crown." Do we not often hear about the martyr's crown?

STEPHEN WAS NOT EVEN ALLOWED to finish his speech, let alone continue the work of preaching, for which he seemed so exceptionally fitted. His death must have appeared to his sorrowing friends as a cruel blow to the church and a great waste of wonderful material. But some broken efforts are more fruitful because of the break, as fruit trees are pruned to bring forth more fruit.

LAY STRESS ON ACTS 8: 4. The result of this per-

secution and of driving the Christians away from Jerusalem was to spread the new doctrines broadcast, not to stamp them out. It was like trying to put out a camp-fire by throwing a big stone into its midst. That would simply scatter the brands and add to the number of sparks, each of which might kindle a new fire of its own.

MAKE AS DRAMATIC as possible the description of Stephen's glorified face, and the impression which this young martyr's appearance and brave bearing must have made upon Saul, another brave young man, as he stood by, not lifting a hand himself, but "consenting unto his death."

BE CAREFUL to have it understood that this Saul is the Paul about whom we are to study.

DRAW A PARALLEL between the fearless, brilliant intellect of Stephen, and that of our own fiery Theodore Parker.

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Stephen's conduct. There are two ways in which a Christian may conduct himself toward the world: run away from it, as the monks did in the Middle Ages, or accept it as the place for gallant endeavor. "If you are not master of your world, you are either a refugee, or a slave to it." F. G. Peabody, *Religious Education of an American Citizen*. P. 166.

LESSON MOTTO

"The only thing I am afraid of is Fear."

—Montaigne.

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QUESTIONS, LESSON VI

1.

Tell us what you can find out about the character of Stephen, one of the deacons chosen, you remember, to look after the welfare of the church in Jerusalem. You can find out a great deal about him by reading carefully the 6th and 7th chapters of Acts and still more by consulting a good encyclopædia.

2.

I shall ask you to read in class Acts 6: 8,10. Did you ever see a greater amount of character and history packed into thirty-one words?

3.

Stephen, one of the deacons, developed great power as a preacher. But he aroused the enmity of certain Jews because of the boldness of his utterances. It is thought he may have quoted the words of Jesus as given in Mark 13 about the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem. Find these for us, please.

4.

Tell us what happened to Stephen after he had roused the enmity of a certain class of Jews. Was he treated fairly by his enemies? Read in class Acts 6: 9, 11-15.

5.

What do you think of Stephen's sermon as given in the seventh chapter of Acts? Which seems to you the most important part of it?

6.

See if you can find in Isaiah the passage quoted by Stephen in Acts 7: 49-50. The marginal reference will help.

7.

We have had men of the same type of mind as Stephen in our own Unitarian Church. Tell us what you can find out about Theodore Parker. Look in the encyclopædia or a good biographical dictionary.

8.

Do you think Stephen's death described in the 6th and 7th chapters of Acts and the first part of chapter 8 was a blessing in disguise? It resulted in driving most of the Christians away from Jerusalem for a time. Just think what that means.

LESSON VII

SIMON THE SORCERER

(Acts 8: 1-25)

We must now go back a few months to the time when the Christians were beginning to attract unfavorable attention at Jerusalem. The wise old rabbi Gamaliel, who was the teacher of young Saul, was much more lenient toward them than was Saul himself. Gamaliel was a Pharisee, like the younger man; he was beloved by everybody and known to be the soul of honor. Naturally broad-minded and courageous, he had lived long enough in the world to learn that the ways of God are not always the ways of men, even of devout men. He was willing to believe that God's love and grace might extend to the adherents of this hated new sect; so he disapproved of hasty action against them. (1) He made a speech in behalf of the Apostles, in which he cited history, after the best Hebrew manner, to prove that God might be trusted to deal with such people himself, and that it was not necessary to put them to death. (Read Acts 5: 34-42)

But, as we see in the last verse of this passage from Acts, the Christians paid small heed to warnings, and persisted in preaching and talking. Then

came the riot which resulted in the death of Stephen, when the followers of Jesus were driven from Jerusalem.

Philip, the other deacon who had developed such a gift of eloquence, escaped into Samaria. (2) He seems to have wandered from place to place for a time, and finally to have settled in Cæsarea where he remained for many years. It is recorded that he entertained Paul at his home there when the latter was on his way to Jerusalem. (Acts 21:8) (3) Samaria was the central one of the three districts into which Palestine was at that time divided. (4) Its inhabitants were despised by the stricter Jews of the north and south, because they had intermarried with Greeks and other "barbarians" and held comparatively lax religious views. (5) Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, (6) and his talk with the woman at the well, recorded in the fourth chapter of John, show how they were generally regarded, and also show, in contrast, how Jesus felt about them.

Philip's preaching was successful. Others succeeded as well, and to keep burning all these new fires of the Gospel which had been kindled and to establish relations between the various groups of new converts and the older church at Jerusalem, to which the Christians were gradually returning, Peter and John went down to visit them.

Our lesson to-day is taken from a most picturesque incident of this journey. (7) (Acts 8:9-25) Peter's bitter words, far more scathing than any-

thing he said to Ananias, (8) seem finally to have driven the wickedness out of the magician's heart, though we are left uncertain whether it was real conviction of sin, or only craven fear of the consequences of sin, which led him to beg Peter to pray for him.

SUGGESTIONS

USE MAP in connection with explanations about Samaria. The pupils should be able to describe and point out its location, as this was part of the work of the preceding year in the Beacon Course on the *Story of Jesus*. This is a good time to fix the location of Cæsarea, and its relation to Jerusalem, to which reference is so frequent in subsequent lessons.

PHILIP THE EVANGELIST of this lesson is not the Philip of Christ's chosen twelve, but the deacon mentioned in Acts 6:5 and Acts 21:8-9, the same who had four daughters "which did prophesy."

SIMON THE SORCERER. A magician in those days really understood the laws of nature better than most people. He "represented a stage half way between a gipsy fortune-teller and a modern man of science." Whether he used his knowledge for good or ill depended upon the man. This Simon has not left a good reputation behind him. Some believe he claimed to be the Messiah and to rival Jesus. There are many grotesque stories about him. One

makes him the father of all heresies. It tells how he went to Rome and enjoyed immense success until Peter and Paul arrived. He had announced that he would be caught up into heaven, and was actually floating off through the air in a chariot drawn by demons when Peter and Paul knelt in prayer and he fell to earth, a mangled corpse. He was supposed to have a familiar spirit, which he had made by charming the soul out of the body of a boy. This body he used for his own evil purposes.

THE WORD SIMONY defined as "the act or practice of trafficking in sacred things" is an unpleasant reminder of this Simon's effort to purchase the gift of the Holy Ghost. Some of the corrupt practices of the Church of the Middle Ages, such as selling indulgences for sins committed or about to be committed, seem to us very like this.

WITCHCRAFT was strongly condemned by Old Testament writers. "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft." (I Sam. 15:23) "I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand and thou shalt have no more soothsayers." (Micah 5:12) Deuteronomy 18:9-12 forbade practices of witchcraft or enchantment in the Promised Land.

MAGIC, "white" and "black."

NATURAL LAW MORE WONDERFUL THAN ANY MAGIC. Imagine what a world without law would be like: if you did not know in the morning whether the sun was about to rise or set; whether the glass of milk you drank would nourish or poison you, etc., etc.

**BOOKS HELPFUL IN PREPARING
THIS LESSON**

Simon the Sorcerer, in G. H. Gilbert's *A Short History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*, p. 52.

Simon Magus, article in *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

Sorcery, in Ramsay's *St. Paul, Traveler and Roman Citizen*, p. 78.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

Judging a man's acts by his motives.

Science and religion: should there be any conflict between them?

LESSON MOTTO

“Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.”

—Goldsmith.

QUESTIONS, LESSON VII

1.

Most of our lesson for next Sunday is to be found in Acts 8: 9-25; but we also have a little about a very fine old Jew named Gamaliel. We shall meet him again, so it is worth while to get acquainted with him.

Please see what you can find out about him in Acts 5: 34, and in the encyclopædia. and come prepared to pass on your information to the rest of us.

2.

One of the characters in our next lesson story (Acts 8: 9-25) is Philip, mentioned also in Acts 21: 8. Find out all

you can about him. In the encyclopædia the heading of the article about this particular Philip will probably be "Philip, the evangelist."

3.

Next Sunday's lesson takes place in Samaria. Please look up Samaria on the map and also in some good book of reference. You will find that it was not only the name of a city, but of the country round about it.

4.

See if you can find out how the Jews of other parts of the country regarded the people of Samaria, and why. Do you remember what was said about this in last year's course on the Story of Jesus? John 4: 9 may remind you. The Britannica has a long article about Samaria.

5.

Our next lesson is to be about Simon the Sorcerer, Acts 8: 9-25. The incident took place in Samaria, whose people were not at all popular with the Jews. How did Jesus regard them? I think you can find out by referring to his parable of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10: 30-36, and to Luke 9: 52-56.

6.

Our next lesson is to be about Simon the Sorcerer, Acts 8: 9-25. The incident took place in Samaria, whose people were not at all popular with the Jews from other parts of the country. You will find a story about the way Jesus treated one of them, the woman at the well, in the fourth chapter of John. Please read it to us.

7.

Our next lesson is to be about Simon the Sorcerer, Acts 8: 9-25. Please explain to us just what a sorcerer is supposed to be.

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8.

Our next lesson is to be about Simon the Sorcerer, Acts 8: 9-25. See if you can find out how witchcraft was regarded by the Old Testament writers. The following references may help you: Deut. 18: 9-12; Micah 5: 12; and I Sam. 15: 23.

LESSON VIII

PHILIP AND THE EUNUCH

(Acts 8:26-40)

(1) Today's lesson is taken from another incident of Philip's ministry. (Acts 8:26-28) (2) (3) Tell a little about Ethiopia, with its civilization akin to that of Egypt, or possibly even older.

The king was chosen from among the priests; (4) and Candace was probably the name of the king's mother, though several ladies bearing this title appear to have reigned vigorously on their own account.

There is a legend that the given name of this particular Candace was Judith, and that of the Ethiopian treasurer, Juda. Very likely he was a convert to Judaism, and was returning home after worshiping at Jerusalem, when he encountered Philip. (See position of Gaza on map with relation to Jerusalem and Ethiopia.)

(5) (6) Read Acts 8:26-34. (7) Then read Isaiah 53:7-8, and more if there is time. Small wonder the Ethiopian desired explanations! Finish the rest of the story. (Acts 8:35-39)

Ask the class what meaning this lesson has for us. (8) "Do it now" and "With all thy might" are both

good answers. Keeping to the first, enlarge on the value of initial impulse. "Quench not the spirit" would be an excellent text for the children to learn. Use incidents in the daily experience of everyone. For example, in mending, that old adage "A stitch in time saves nine" is as true as it is tiresome. The value of a dose of medicine depends very greatly upon the moment when it is administered.

SUGGESTIONS

ETHIOPIA. Greek name for the country south of Egypt, meaning "land of the sunburnt faces." Its inhabitants were a nation of traders, a chain of ruins from the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean still marking the route of its ancient commerce. Rude sculptures on some of these ruins show the women as warlike, dragging captives by the hair. The physical type was handsome, beautifully formed, slender, the skin dark brown in color. The soldiers carried spears as long as themselves, two-edged swords, and shields made of rhinoceros hide.

Some people believe that the Queen of Sheba came from this region. The king was chosen from among the priests, who continued to have greater power than he, for they could command him to take his own life if they chose to do so, saying the gods had ordered it. The sentence of death, even for people of lesser rank, was always in this form. A messenger with the fatal sign appeared before the

condemned, who was then expected to retire to his own house and commit suicide.

The women were people of spirit. A story is told about a mother whose son tried to escape instead of killing himself when ordered to do so. She strangled him with her own girdle, feeling that death was indeed preferable to dishonor.

CANDACE. Two queens of this name are mentioned in history. One was a one-eyed virago who invaded Egypt b. c. 22, and had the courage to defy Rome itself.

The other is the Candace mentioned in Acts. According to tradition she was converted by her treasurer after he returned home; and she built a church, called St. Mary of Zion, in Aksoum, which may be seen to this day. After her death, however, Christianity died out among her subjects, and did not reappear in the region for several centuries.

EUNUCH may be described as an Eastern court official.

Do it Now. In Roosevelt's letters to his children are several "Do it Now" stories. One tells how he rescued a kitten and secured a good home for it while on the way to church. Another shows with what promptness, yet with what sympathy, he managed mischievous youngsters, his boys and their friends, in the White House.

Another story came to the writer very direct,—only at second hand, or should one say mouth? It is a war-story story about the Prince of Wales. Army surgeons were sure that hospital needs or

abuses would be quickly righted if they came to his attention. There was a rumor that unfortunate influences were at work near the King and Queen. Certain persons more interested in furthering their own fortunes than in winning the war were interfering. The Prince heard about it, made a hurried trip across the Channel for an interview with his parents, had the wrong-doers removed, and was back at his post before most of the command even knew he had left camp.

PHOTOGRAPHS of sculptures on Egyptian ruins may be of interest. While it may not be possible to procure those actually from this extreme southern region, there are others in Egypt proper, showing captive Assyrians led by the hair.

Photographs of the Bisharines of today will give an adequate idea of the physical characteristics of these people. They are also traders, and come from the south to haunt the region of the First Cataract of the Nile to sell beads and curios to traders. They carry spears, shields of skin, and fierce looking swords.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

Casual meetings, and what may come of them.

“Doing it now”

TO BE MEMORIZED

“Quench not the Spirit” I Thess. 5:19.

LESSON MOTTO

"Be ready to do your duty *when* you see it, and as you see it."
—T. Roosevelt.

QUESTIONS, LESSON VIII

1.

Next Sunday's lesson will be found in Acts 8: 26-40. Please refresh our memory by recalling what we have already learned about Philip the Evangelist.

2.

Next Sunday's lesson will be found in Acts 8: 26-40. Tell us about Gaza. Where and what was it? I think you will find that it was *not* a desert as one would suppose by merely reading Acts 8:26. The Encyclopædia Britannica will tell you about it. It was there that Samson carried away the gate of the city, posts and bar and all.

3.

Our lesson for next Sunday will be found in Acts 8: 26-40. Tell us what you can find out about Ethiopia, where it lay, and what kind of people lived there.

4.

Next Sunday's lesson will be found in Acts 8: 26-40. See if you can find out anything about this Queen Candace, or any other queen of that name. Perhaps it was not a given name at all, but only a title. What do your books of reference say? If you have not any such books at home, you might look in those at school.

5.

Next Sunday's lesson will be found in Acts 8: 26-40. Since the Ethiopians were not of the Jewish faith, it is supposed that this treasurer of the queen had become a convert to Judaism and had been up to Jerusalem to wor-

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ship. Tell us how many times a year all the Jews and Jewish converts who could possibly do so were supposed to present themselves in the temple.

You remember the three great festivals.

6.

Next Sunday's lesson will be found in Acts 8:26-40. I shall ask you to read aloud verses 26-34.

7.

Next Sunday's lesson will be found in Acts 8: 26-40. There is in it a quotation from the prophet Isaiah. See if you can find it, in the fifty-third chapter, and be ready to read it when called upon.

8.

Next Sunday's lesson will be found in Acts 8: 26-40. Please read it over carefully and tell us, when called upon, why you think it was chosen for a lesson and what it may teach us. There are several good answers. I am curious to know whether you choose the one I have in mind.

LESSON IX

PETER'S VISION UPON THE HOUSETOPO

(Acts 10:1-18)

It was not only because of Peter's sermons that he became famous. You remember he had the power of making people feel that they could do things, even of making the sick feel well. Because of his acts of healing, people flocked to him. It was believed that if his shadow fell upon a sick person it would work a cure.

While traveling about, visiting the new churches, he made Joppa, the seaport of Jerusalem, his headquarters. It is a bad port for modern ships, but did very well for the tiny vessels of Peter's day. (Show position on the map, and give a moment or two to its appearance, and to its picturesque real and legendary history. Do not forget the aspect of the roofs, which become out-door living rooms in Palestine, and have a particular place in this story.)

In Joppa, Peter lodged with "one Simon a tanner," although tanners were not in very good repute. This was because their trade made it necessary for them to handle dead animals. Even many living animals were classed as "unclean" by the Jewish laws, which were very explicit about

touching things which were unclean. They were equally explicit concerning the animals which were to be used as food, and those which were not. (Read a little of Leviticus 11. A very small portion will suffice, but it is convincing, and worth doing.)

(1) (2) Read the lesson in the following order: Acts 10, beginning "Peter went up upon the house-top to pray" in the ninth verse, and ending with the sixteenth verse. Let us think first of this story of Peter's vision as if it really happened, as the writer of this account wanted us to do. This command to kill and eat was contrary to all his training and habits of thought, and he must have been sorely perplexed. Yet it must have reminded him very forcibly of certain acts and sayings of Jesus. Soon he had the opportunity to put the lesson it taught into practice. (3) (4) (Read Acts 10:1-8 and 17-35) Peter went on to tell his hearers the story of Jesus. (5) (Read Acts 10:44-48)

(6) (7) Peter was severely criticised for taking an uncircumcised Gentile into the church; (8) but after this illuminating vision he was convinced that it was the right thing to do, and told his critics so, boldly. (Read Acts 11:1-18)

A different view of Peter's attitude and his contention with Paul over the admission of uncircumcised Gentiles to the Christian group is given in Galatians, which is earlier and more accurately historical. (See Gal. 2:2, 6-9, 11-14. Cephas is of course Peter.)

The attitude of Peter on this question, and this

incident of the baptism of Cornelius and the discussion to which it gave rise, mark the beginning of a great historical change. It was the first step in making a world religion out of what until then had been a mere Jewish sect, which would have remained a Jewish sect forever had Peter's critics had their way. Like the majority of their race they were so bound by Jewish law that it seemed impossible to escape from its trammels,—as hard as it is for one born into the castes of India to escape from them today. The followers of Jesus who were Jews by birth were sure that a man or woman could become a good Christian only by first conforming to every detail of Jewish law. They still looked upon themselves as a favored people, and could not grasp the full meaning of Jesus' teachings about God's love for all his human children.

Even Peter finally concluded that on the whole it was better to follow Jewish law. He became the missionary to his own people, just as Paul, in after years, carried the gospel into strange lands.

The church at Jerusalem, which shared Peter's views, later sank into comparative insignificance, bound by these fetters of Jewish law. Yet it did the world inestimable service by preserving the traditions and sayings of Jesus, even while blind to the larger aspects of his gospel.

It happened that the most forceful teachers of the Christian faith were men of Jewish birth; but they were the ones who outgrew this narrow view.

Time and again this same spirit of liberality has burst the bonds that were closing around it as Ideals began to harden into Routine.

One such manifestation sent our Pilgrim Fathers across the Atlantic.

SUGGESTIONS

THE HISTORICAL ASPECT. By working "overtime" the last point made, this lesson, which begins with food and ends with the Pilgrim Fathers may be made to do duty at Thanksgiving time.

JOPPA. A very old seaport, often captured and recaptured. Once it was taken by Richard Cœur de Lion. It was the haunt of pirates; and, according to fable, the place where Andromache was exposed to the sea-monster and rescued by Perseus. In proof of it, her chains and the skeleton of the monster were exhibited.

GROWTH OF AN IDEA. The taking of Cornelius, a Gentile, into the Church caused great commotion. In time, however, the idea did not seem so revolutionary. Paul also faced criticism when he avowed himself an apostle to the Gentiles, but not nearly so much as he might have experienced had it not been for Peter and Cornelius.

This growth of new ideas is an historic fact, repeated time and again. The attitude toward slavery during our Civil War is an example. At the opening of the war many people thought it wrong, but did not see the way to end it. In four years its

abolition was a thing accomplished. Ideas and events move swiftly in times of war.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION.

The brotherhood of man.

Difficulty of its application in our daily lives.

TO BE MEMORIZED

“What God hath cleansed, that call thou not common” (that is, unclean.) Acts 10:15.

“God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him.” Acts 10:34-35.

LESSON MOTTO

The words of the poet Abdul Fazl, which he wrote at the command of the Emperor Akbar, in the sixteenth century, as an inscription for a temple in Kashmir:

“O God, in every temple I see people that see Thee, and in every language they praise Thee.

“Sometimes I frequent the Christian cloister, and sometimes the mosque. But it is Thou Whom I seek from temple to temple.

“Thine elect have no dealings with heresy or orthodoxy, for neither of these stands behind the screen of Thy Truth. Heresy for the heretic and religion for the orthodox!

“But the dust of the rose-petal belongs to the heart of the perfume seller.”

Prefixed to Tennyson's poem “Akbar's Dream.” The whole of this poem would be excellent to read here.

QUESTIONS, LESSON IX

1.

Your share of next Sunday's lesson will be Acts 10: 9-16. Please read or tell it to us. Will you also learn the Memory Verses? (Acts 10: 15, 34-35)

2.

Can you tell us what the word "common," (that is "unclean") in Acts 10: 15 meant to a Jew? A look at the 11th chapter of Leviticus will help you.

3.

Please either read or tell to us the part of our lesson story found in Acts 10: 1-8. Will you learn the Memory Verses? (Acts 10: 15, 34-35)

4.

Please take as your especial part of our long lesson next Sunday Acts 10: 17-33. Tell or read to us the part of this that has not already been told.

5.

Give three or four points made by Peter in his speech. (Acts 10: 34-44) Which one do you think most impressive?

6.

How many times and in what verses is the vision of Cornelius repeated? The vision of Peter? See Acts, chapter 10.

7.

Tell us the results that followed Peter's talk (Acts 10:

44-48) and the complaint made by the brethren in Jerusalem. (Acts 11:1-3)

8.

Tell us the reasons Peter gave for venturing to transgress the Jewish rule. See Acts 11:15-17.

LESSON X

PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON

(Acts 12:1-19)

We hear a great deal about Herod in the New Testament, but the name does not always refer to the same person. (1) Herod who ordered the massacre of the babies when Jesus was born, Herod before whom Christ was brought for trial, and the two Herods who persecuted the apostles, were all different persons, though members of the same family,—a family of local rulers, who exercised authority for Rome in Palestine. The one mentioned in today's lesson was Herod Agrippa I, a grandson of Herod the Great. He had been educated in Rome, and though he lived as a Pharisee when among the Jews, he paid little attention to Jewish customs when with his Gentile friends. He liked to make a good impression and was more likely to be generous than just. It is said he was so generous that he was almost always in debt.

Liking to make a good impression, he did some things expressly to win the approval of the Jews, who were bitter against the new sect of Nazarenes, as the followers of Jesus in Palestine were called. He put to death James, the brother of John; and,

pleased with the commendation this brought forth, he planned to increase it by arresting Peter and imprisoning him in the Tower Antonia near the temple at Jerusalem. (Use again the tracing of the city showing the position of the prison.) Peter was accordingly arrested. (2) This was at the season of the Passover, A. D. 44. It was very offensive to Jewish feeling to have a trial and execution during a holy season; but Herod meant to take advantage of the crowds assembled for the festival to conduct after the Passover a trial of great solemnity, and after convicting Peter, to have him executed very publicly.

Read, turn about, in class, the story of Peter's deliverance. (Acts 12:1-19) Bring out certain points in the lesson as the reading proceeds: (3) the meaning of "quaternions of soldiers"; (4) (5) (6) meaning of "angels," and Bible stories of their appearance. Explain that this was a poetic Eastern account of his release, the exact details of which we do not know.

(7) Emphasize the humanness of the tale, the way in which little Rhoda lost her head, and the way that Peter, who was not always so fortunate, kept his. (8) Also, his serenity under trying circumstances.

This is the application for us: Serenity, readiness, etc., as qualities for life.

SUGGESTIONS

FOUR QUATERNIONS OF SOLDIERS. Each quater-

nion was a group of four. Thus there would always be four men on guard.

According to Roman law, a soldier who slept at his post deserved to die.

ANGELS are mentioned in almost every book of the Old and New Testaments.

They interfered when Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac. Gen. 22: 11.

Turned Balaam from his purpose. Numbers 22: 22.

Fed Elijah. I Kings 19: 5.

Delivered the three youths from the fiery furnace. Dan. 3: 28.

Threatened Jerusalem with destruction. I Chron. 21: 15.

Wrestled with Jacob. Gen. 32: 24.

Appeared to Mary before the birth of Jesus. Luke 1: 26-38.

Appeared to the shepherds announcing his birth. Luke 2: 9-15.

“Strengthened” Jesus as he prayed upon the Mount of Olives. Luke 22: 43.

Were in the tomb itself, telling the women that Jesus was not there. Luke 24: 4-7.

Take part in many less dramatic incidents.

“Angels” as used in the Bible means very much the same thing as Messenger of God or from God. Not always recognized as such; sometimes they seemed *very* ordinary folk; sometimes they did not take human form,—were only ideas.

PETER'S EXPERIENCE. "It is said that he 'came to himself' after he had passed the iron gate. This implies that what went before was as a dream."

—G. H. Gilbert, *A Short History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*, p. 84.

"Some circumstances of which we are ignorant, and which they believed to be miraculous, opened his prison doors. One night, when a number of the faithful were assembled at the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where Peter was in the habit of staying, they heard a knock upon the door. . . ." —Renan.

PICTURE. Use Raphael's Vatican fresco of Peter's delivery from prison.

LESSON MOTTOES

"O my King; show me thy face, shining in the dark!"
—Henry Van Dyke.

"I am the Lord thy God, which leadeth thee by the way
that thou shouldest go." Isaiah 48:17.

QUESTIONS, LESSON X

1.

Our next lesson (Acts 12: 1-19) begins with a reference to Herod. We hear a great deal about Herod in the New Testament, but the person referred to is not always the same.

Tell us what you can find about this family of local rulers who exercised authority for Rome in Palestine.

2.

Tell us what you remember about the "feast of unleav-

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ened bread" and the crowds who went up to Jerusalem to celebrate it.

3.

Tell us what is meant by "four quaternions of soldiers" in our next lesson. (Acts 12: 1-19) They were Roman soldiers, of course.

4.

Tell the part played by an angel in the story in Numbers 22. Find one New Testament incident which includes an angel.

5.

A story in I Kings 19 includes an angel. Please tell us the incident. Also give one New Testament story in which an angel plays a part.

6.

What story in Daniel 3 includes an angel? Tell also one New Testament incident (not the account of Jesus' birth) in which an angel is said to appear.

7.

Next Sunday's lesson will be from Acts 12: 1-19. Please read it over carefully and tell us after thinking about it "over-night" what seems to you the most remarkable thing about the story.

8.

Next Sunday's lesson is to be found in Acts 12: 1-19. What do you think it was that kept Peter so serene under very unusual and exciting circumstances.

PART II

PAUL: BEGINNING TO BE A CHRISTIAN

LESSON XI

BOYHOOD OF PAUL

(Read Acts 21:39; 22:3, 27-28; 26:4-7. Eph. 6:1-4)

This lesson is important in laying the foundations for an understanding of many lessons to come.

Show with a map, Tarsus (1) the town of Paul's birth, an ancient city on the fertile plain of Cilicia, with oppressive climate. The small swift Cydnus, flowing through its centre, was the boast of the town. Its natural advantages had been improved to the utmost, and there was a great lagoon upon which ships could ride at anchor, and on whose shores were arsenals. Leaving this lagoon, the river flowed on again to enter the sea ten miles away.

Another source of the town's prosperity was a wonderful road, seventy miles in length, which led from this harbor and the city out through the (2) "Cilician Gates," a narrow gorge only wide enough to permit the passage of the road and a little stream, a tributary of the Cydnus. After passing this gorge the road climbed the Taurus mountain range to the valuable lead mines in the hilly country beyond.

Few mountain passes have been more important

in history than the "Cilician Gates." Many armies marched along that road before Paul's day, and many more were to do so in succeeding centuries.

(3) The names of Cyrus the Younger, of Alexander the Great, of Septimus Severus, and, in later years, of the Crusaders who went from Europe to rescue the Holy Sepulchre, conjure up visions of pomp and power which ought to remove Tarsus forever from the ignominy of being a mere black speck upon the map. Basil Mathews calls this highway "the road that lies like a bridge from Europe to Asia."

Greeks had built the road, and the town considered itself Greek, though in some ways it was very like the towns of Palestine, and the language commonly spoken was the the language Jesus used, Aramaic. There was a university where Greek philosophy might be studied, but the inhabitants were commonly believed to be vain, pleasure-loving, and illiterate. Probably they were very like those of Pompeii.

According to legend the town had been founded by Sardanapalus, and one of the "sights" of the city was a great statue of that corrupt Assyrian monarch, snapping his fingers and saying "eat, drink and play; nothing else is worth while," an inscription to which Paul refers. (1. Cor. 15:32)

It was at Tarsus that Anthony and Cleopatra first met, when the latter sailed into the land-locked harbor in a wonderful boat. (4) In Paul's day this little city, which liked to believe itself the rival of

Athens, had passed under Roman rule; but Rome treated it very kindly, making many concessions to the prejudices of its inhabitants.

(5) Paul's father was a Jew, (6) evidently a rich one, for he was also a Roman citizen, (7) and only very wealthy or influential Jews were accorded that privilege. Paul had a married sister whose son later saved Paul's life at Jerusalem. (See Acts 23:12-24)

So this boy about whom we are to study grew up in a Jewish household, in a Greek town, under Roman rule. (8) These three phases of culture all had their parts in quickening his active mind, and making him what he became,—a citizen of the world.

SUGGESTIONS

BOYHOOD OF PAUL. Draw as realistic and attractive a picture as possible of a devout Jewish household: the joy over the birth of a son; the careful plans made for his education, and the pride taken by his mother and father in his progress toward the goal of Jewish ambition, the dignity of Rabbi. The end of Paul's childhood comes in a journey by caravan to Jerusalem for the purpose of enrolling himself among Gamaliel's students in Solomon's Porch of the Temple. This was what entering college is to an ambitious boy today.

BOOKS. *Paul the Dauntless* by Basil Mathews, pp. 25-52, will furnish much suggestive material.

The Syrian Christ and *A Far Journey* by A. M. Rihbany contain very personal and true details,—memories of the writer's own childhood in an Eastern land. *When I was a Boy in Palestine* by Mousa J. Keleel gives bits like the following: “The minute a boy baby is born, a mad scramble is started by the women attendants to reach the father first, and thus win the prize money.” (In this case a large silver coin.) The happy father was expected to furnish refreshments for everybody in the house,—coffee for the men, candy and cucumbers for women and children.

“If a baby at birth is weak and inactive, an onion is held under its nose, and the sneeze of life usually responds.”

Playthings and games of the boys were very like our own. Marbles, leap-frog, blind-man's buff, are mentioned by this writer.

ARAMAIC. “A class of languages so called from Aram, a geographical term, which in old Semitic usage designates nearly the same districts as the Greek word Syria.” *Ency. Brit.*

LESSON MOTTO

“A lad of metal, a good boy.”

—Shakespeare, *King Henry IV.*

QUESTIONS, LESSON XI

1.

With the next lesson we begin the study of Paul's character and work.

As your part please show us Tarsus on the map and tell us all you can find out about the city. Was it free, or under the power of Rome? Did it have any peculiar features or advantages?

2.

What can you tell us about the Cilician Gates near Tarsus, the town where Paul was born? Was he called Paul as a boy?

3.

We are going to spend the next lesson period in trying to find out what kind of life Paul probably lived as a child. His father was a Jew; he lived in a city that considered itself Greek, but which had passed under Roman rule; so all three of these influences entered into his life.

He probably saw Roman soldiers marching by. What would he think of them if he was a normal boy?

4.

Paul, a Jew, lived as a child in a town which liked to consider itself Greek, but which was under Roman rule. Look in Acts 17:16-31, and tell us if you think familiarity with Greek thought helped prepare him for this speech in Athens.

5.

We are going to spend the next lesson period in trying to find out the kind of life Paul probably lived while a boy.

Tell us some things a Jewish boy was supposed to learn.

6.

What can you tell us about the Jewish schools for little children in old days. Were they like ours? Or were they like the Turkish schools today, where all the scholars sit on the floor around their teacher, committing things to memory at the top of their voices?

7.

We are beginning now to study Paul. The next lesson will be devoted to his childhood. Every Jewish father was required by Jewish law to have his boy taught a trade. This applied to rich and poor alike. See if you can find out what trade this boy learned.

8.

In a harbor full of boats filled with sailors from strange lands, Paul probably spent some of his leisure prowling around the wharves, sniffing the strange smell of sea-going ships, and hearing tales about far countries. Do you think the experience had any "educational value" for him, as his life afterward developed?

LESSON XII

CONVERSION OF PAUL

(Acts 9:1-19)

The method of teaching practised under the marble pillars of Solomon's Porch was similar to that used in the schools Paul had attended as a young boy in Tarsus, varied only by the difference in age of the students. They no longer sat on the ground and chanted their lessons in noisy chorus. The young men gathered around their instructor and listened to his words of wisdom, making notes on tablet or scroll, as he went over his statements again and again, repeating and explaining until they had them by heart. The students were encouraged to think, but only along well-established lines. The rabbis of the time said that the ideal student of the law should have a mind like a well-plastered cistern, from which nothing that once entered could escape.

Paul's natural ability brought him distinction among Gamaliel's pupils. Soon he was entitled to be called Rabbi on his own account; was perhaps in training for missionary service, (Gal. 1:15-16) and was employed as agent by the Sanhedrin; a brilliant young man, at the threshold of what promised to be a long and notable career. We can imagine the delight of his parents when the news reached Tarsus.

Deeply pious by nature, having been brought up a Pharisee, and following all their practices "after the strictest sect," as he said himself, (Acts 26:5; 23:6; Phil. 3:5; Acts 23:3) it was not strange that the doings and sayings of the Nazarenes filled him with wrath. He thought them blasphemers in religion, and low-born disturbers of the peace. He is the one man mentioned by name as witnessing and "consenting unto" the death of Stephen. "As for Saul," the Bible story tells us, "he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison." (Acts 8:3)

The death of Stephen evidently made a deep and painful impression upon him. He could not forget the martyr's radiant face. Uneasy, without knowing why, he sought relief in activity and harried the Christians more and more. Acts 9:1-2 tells us he was not content with persecuting them at Jerusalem, but asked to be sent to Damascus, to work against them there. (Acts 26:9-11; 22:4-5; I. Cor. 15:9; Phil. 3:6; Gal. 1:13)

It was while on his way to Damascus, indeed almost at his journey's end, that the great and marvelous experience came to him.

There are five different and varied stories of this occurrence. Paul gives the simplest, and probably the oldest account (1) in Gal. 1:13-17. In I. Cor. 15:8 he briefly refers to it, (2) and in Acts there are three versions: Acts 9:3-18; 22:1-16; and 26:9-19. (3) The marvelous and supernatural enter

more and more into the story with repeated tellings, as the wonder of the experience sinks in. Such an experience could not be related in the speech of the East without recourse to symbolism and poetic expression. Indeed, the same would be true in practical America. We occasionally "see light" ourselves.

Probably it was not so sudden a conversion as it seemed, but in reality was only the sudden final flowering of processes long and silently at work. (4) They may have begun at the moment of Stephen's death, when the young Saul stood erect by the pile of coats and watched.

Let us read the account as given in Acts 9:3-18, (in sections, as question numbers indicate.) It is very vivid. We seem to (5) see the hot path at noonday, with the sun beating down pitilessly upon rocks and parched herbs,—a most unlikely place for a mystic vision; to hear the voice, which may have seemed an ordinary sound of nature to his companions, but to him was the accusing, sorrowful call of Christ; (6) to share his emotion, which so unnerved him that he had to be led the rest of the way, like one bereft of sight.

In the cool still room of his host in the street called Straight he lay for three days, refusing food and drink, going over and over again every detail of the strange experience; trying to reason it out, and coming ever nearer the conclusion that it had been no trick of fancy, but was indeed the voice of God. (7) Then, when he was almost at the end of

physical and emotional strength, he was visited by brave Ananias, (8) who dared enter the house of a man presumably his enemy, to lay his hand upon the head of this persecutor of Christians, and call him "Brother Saul!"

Paul states (Gal. 1:17) that after this he went into Arabia, probably to some quiet spot northeast of Damascus which was at that time under Arabian rule, where he could be away from men and alone with nature for a time, to think things over and make the decisions which must be made. This thing which had happened was for him much more than a mere change in religious belief, great as that would be. It meant that if he, Paul the Rabbi, was true to his new conception of duty, he must uproot and overturn his whole life. He could no longer follow the career planned for him from birth, and which stretched before him so full of honor and invitation. He would be separated from his best friends; cursed where he had been applauded; driven in ignominy from the beautiful temple he loved. The new career meant inevitable estrangement from his family; it might even break the hearts of his parents.

There was a great deal to think about, in that quiet place outside of Damascus.

SUGGESTIONS

PHARISEES. "The Pharisees' great aim was to know and obey all the law: for they believed that,

if one man obeyed the whole Law for a whole day, the Messiah who was to bring in the Golden Age of freedom and peace would arrive." (Basil Mathews, *Paul the Dauntless*, p. 54.) This explains why they thought it worth while to do so many tiresome things!

PAUL'S EXPERIENCE. As to what happened to Paul, physically and psychologically, a wise preacher has said "one man's guess is as good as another's." It is therefore not worth while to discuss it at length with the young people, who will understand that it was a spiritual experience, and be fully occupied with that.

PICTURES. *Cairo, Jerusalem, and Damascus* by D. S. Margoliouth, with illustrations in color by W. S. S. Tyrwhitt, gives an idea of the beauty of Damascus in its surroundings of fresh young green, which made it so wonderful in that thirsty region.

The Holy Land by Robert Hichens, illustrated by Jules Guerin, contains equally delightful street and bazaar scenes.

BOOKS OF DESCRIPTION. *Out-of-Doors in the Holy Land* by Dr. Van Dyke has a chapter full of color on "The Road to Damascus." *Paul the Dauntless*, by Basil Mathews, pp. 53-55, sketches Paul's student life in the temple, and the character of Gamaliel; pp. 79-90, Paul's experience on the road to Damascus.

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Paul's "wickedness" in persecuting the Christians before his conversion may be broached in a

hushed voice by one of the youngest students. We shall probably decide after reviewing the evidence that he was mistaken, rather than wicked, since at the time he honestly thought he was doing right.

LESSON MOTTO

"A light to guide . . . to check the erring, and reprove."

—Wordsworth.

QUESTIONS, LESSON XII

1.

Read for us in class the earliest and simplest account of Paul's conversion. (Gal. 1: 13-17)

2.

Find the brief reference to Paul's conversion in the 15th chapter of I Corinthians.

3.

Does the account of Paul's conversion grow less or more wonderful with repeated tellings? Compare Gal. 1: 13-17 with Acts 26: 9-19.

4

What was the probable effect on Paul of the death of Stephen?

5.

Tell in your own words what happened to Paul on his journey; what he saw and heard. (Acts 9: 3-6)

6.

What was the effect upon Paul of his vision? You will find out from Acts 9: 6, 8 and 9.

7.

Tell of the vision of Ananias. (Acts 9: 10-16)

8.

Read for us the account of the visit of Ananias to Paul. (Acts 9: 17-19.)

LESSON XIII

PAUL TAKES UP HIS NEW LIFE

(Acts 9: 20-30)

After Paul's conversion he still had all his store of Hebrew learning. All the texts and ancient writings he had studied were still in his mind, and he believed them as devoutly as ever; (1) but he saw that if Jesus was indeed the Messiah his old interpretations must be all wrong,—that it was necessary to reinterpret them according to his new knowledge. So much for his intellectual life.

The change in his physical life would be even greater. His fellow rabbis were sure to be “exceeding mad” against him; and very likely they would treat him as he had treated Stephen. This did not cause him much anxiety compared with the thought of his family, to whom the news that this brilliant son had joined the disciples of the despised Nazarene would bring unspeakable sorrow. That alone must have caused Paul a severe struggle, for he was naturally warm-hearted and affectionate.

But he was brave and loyal; and after a time of meditation and prayer all these things were settled according to his conscience. Then he turned his face toward Damascus and began his walk back toward the city, knowing he was at the beginning of

a long hard road, with martyrdom probably at the end of it. (2) It would have been easy to slip away to some far corner of the Roman Empire where the first part at least of his new career would be free from danger; but he chose to begin exactly where the great change had come upon him.

The Roman sentry on guard at the East Gate of the city let him pass without question. To all appearances he was an ordinary traveler, and not an impressive one at that; (3) for tradition says that Paul was a small man and rather homely; not the kind to attract a second glance. If one did give him a second glance, however, it was apt to be followed by a third. Now he passed quietly out of the sunshine into the cool blue shadows under the arched gate of the city of Damascus. He was never to set foot under a Damascus gate again.

Soon he was preaching in the synagogue. When the Jews heard him say that Jesus was the son of God, they were amazed, and then bitterly angry. Yet he remained there "many days;" (Acts 9:23) "three years" he tells us in Gal. 1:18. Perhaps at first they thought his actions hid some deep design against the hated sect. Later he seemed to them no better than a traitor. They made a plot to kill him, and persuaded Aretas, who ruled the city for the Roman Emperor, to help prevent his escape. Not many hours after this agreement was reached a man armed with a knife lay in wait for him at each one of the city gates.

(4) The walls between the Damascus gates were

sheer and high; but at certain places houses had been built to overhang them. Their walls were blank and sheer also, for oriental houses have very few windows looking outward, almost all the light coming from a central court. There was one house, however, belonging to a Nazarene, which had such a window and overhung the city wall. To this house Paul's friends guided him by night, wrapped in his dark traveling cloak. The little clay hand-lamp which served as a light within the house was extinguished before they entered the room with the window. The stars could be seen in the sky above as Paul looked out, but peer as he would through the shadows, he could not see the ground beneath.

Somebody had brought a stout round basket, with a rope tied to its handles. The night was very still, but they listened intently before thrusting the basket through the window. Again they listened, fairly holding their breath, and repeating a silent prayer. Finally Paul climbed into the basket; and foot by foot his friends lowered it, Paul fending off from the wall meanwhile with his strong hands. When he felt his strange vehicle bump against the ground he stepped out, gave a farewell tug to the rope as a signal to those waiting above, and set off through the shadows toward Jerusalem. (See Paul's own account of this escape in II Cor. 11: 32-33.)

There he did the very hard thing of going into the temple among his old friends and acquaintances, and preaching his new faith as he had preached it at Damascus. He expected his former associates to

turn against him. What he did not expect, was to find that the Christians also distrusted him. Being only human, he may have taken satisfaction in the thought that they would be amazed and overjoyed to find they had gained such a distinguished convert. Instead, they remembered his zeal in persecution, and believed this to be only a new way of collecting evidence against them. Even admitting his conversion to be genuine, he must have seemed to them, as the French writer Renan expresses it, "almost a deserter." "Nowhere, probably, did he feel more alone than in the temple, the scene of his student triumphs."

There was, however, in Jerusalem a Christian Jew from Cyprus, a venerable man named Barnabas, with a face of great patience and dignity. We have (5) already met him, for he was no other than the man who sold his field and gave his money to the church soon after Jesus' death. Also he was a kinsman of "Mary the mother of Mark" at whose door Peter knocked on the night of his escape from prison. Barnabas talked with Paul, believed in his earnestness, and took him to see Peter and the other Christian leaders.

Paul persisted in going about among the very people he had incited against Stephen. As had been the case in Damascus, astonishment gave way to anger, and another plot was laid to kill him, but somebody, perhaps a fellow-student who had loved him in the old days, could not refrain from giving him warning. It was not necessary to escape in

such dramatic fashion as at Damascus, but it was thought best for him to leave the country for a time, and a band of his friends went with him to Cæsarea to see him safely aboard the ship which was to carry him to his old home in Tarsus.

Then came seven long years, about which we know practically nothing, save that he supported himself by tent-making, (6) the trade he had learned in obedience to the good old Jewish custom which required every lad, no matter how rich his parents, to be taught to earn his living by the work of his hands. What sort of reception he met on his arrival; what painful scenes took place between himself and his family; whether they cast him off utterly, or met him occasionally with reproaches, we do not know. In all his writings he is most reticent about his family, but there are passages about the respective duties of parents and children, notably the one in Col. 3: 21, in which some scholars imagine they read between the lines, traces of the suffering and injustice he had borne.

He may have been rich before. He was poor now. He made tents; and told the story of Jesus wherever he could, in the regions of Syria (7) and Cilicia. (Gal. 1: 21) It was all very humdrum, and to a man of his temperament it must have been very trying. (8) But if he was restless, he controlled himself. "He was learning," says Mathews, "the secret of being content, in plenty and hunger, in wealth and poverty." (Phil. 4: 11-13)

Then one day, after this kind of life had gone on

so long that there seemed no prospect of an end until death put a stop to it, a shadow suddenly darkened his doorway, and he looked up from his task to see Barnabas standing before him. (Acts 11:25, 26)

SUGGESTIONS

MANUAL LABOR IN THE JEWISH SCHEME OF LIFE. "It was a custom among the Jews that all boys should learn a trade. 'What is commanded of a father toward his son?' asks a Talmudic writer. 'To circumcise him, to teach him the law, to teach him a trade.' Rabbi Judah saith, 'He that teacheth not his son a trade does the same as if he taught him to be a thief,' and Rabbi Gamaliel saith, 'He that hath a trade in his hand, to what is he like? He is a vineyard that is fenced.'" —Conybeare and Howson, *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 47.

"Every Jewish child had to be taught a trade, for the rabbi said, 'He who does not teach his son a trade virtually teaches him to steal.'" —Coborn, *New Archeological Discoveries*, p. 660.

PICTURES. Oriental houses, walls, gates, with their sunshine and shadow.

Roman soldiers.

Bedouin tents.

In *Paul the Dauntless*, from which this lesson is largely paraphrased, there is a colored picture of Paul's escape from Damascus.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

Paul's courage and disappointment when preaching at Jerusalem.

The discipline of the weary years at Tarsus.

How we can profit by both these experiences of his.

The wisdom of that old custom of teaching every man a useful trade.

LESSON MOTTOES

"Patient of toil, serene amidst alarms; inflexible in faith. . . ."

—Jas. Beattie, *The Minstrel*.

"Do what you can, being what you are.

Shine like a glowworm, if you cannot be a star;

Work like a pulley, if you cannot be a crane;

Be a wheel greaser, if you cannot drive a train."

Judge Payne.

"Everything comes if a man will only wait."

—Disraeli.

QUESTIONS, LESSON XIII

1.

Last Sunday we left Paul going out into the desert to think things over. What sort of questions did he have to decide? Please be prepared to review the latter part of Lesson 12 to refresh our minds concerning his problems.

2.

After deciding the questions that he went out into the desert to think over, Paul returned to Damascus and began preaching his new belief in the synagogue. Was this the only thing he could have done and still remain true to his convictions? Would it not have been safer to slip away to some place where he was not known, to begin his ministry? Why do you think he chose as he did?

3.

Tell what you can find out about Paul's personal appearance. Any good encyclopædia will help you out.

4.

After Paul returned from the desert and began preaching in Damascus, his enemies plotted to kill him. Tell us how he made his escape. Look in Acts 9: 25.

There is a book called *Paul the Dauntless* by Basil Mathews which makes a very interesting story of this escape. Perhaps you can find this book in a library.

5.

Our lesson is going to be about the beginning of Paul's ministry. He meets a man named Barnabas, as you will see in Acts 9: 27. How did Barnabas befriend him,—and where have we met this man before? The answer is in Acts 4: 34-37.

6.

It was the custom among the Jews to teach every boy a trade, no matter how rich his father might be. Do you know what Paul's trade was? Look in Acts 18: 3.

7.

Can you tell us anything about the tents and tent-cloths used by the inhabitants of Syria and Arabia? Were they

made of cotton, or wool, or silk, or goat's hair? Probably you can find out several interesting things about tents by consulting one of the larger encyclopædias.

8.

After Paul began to preach, he was obliged to leave Jerusalem and go back to Tarsus, his native city. Here he remained seven years. We know very little about what happened to him during that time; but it was evidently a time of humdrum labor, of waiting, and of hoping that something more interesting would "turn up" for him to do. Do you think these were wasted years? Why? Why not?

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR LESSONS

In the Old Testament there is a very delightful picture of people making grateful offerings to God. It is in the story of the building of the temple. "Then the people offered willingly; and they gave for the house of God gold and silver in abundance. And they with whom precious stones were found gave them to the treasure of the House of the Lord. And the people rejoiced, for that with a perfect heart they offered willingly." (I Chron. 29: 6-9)—U. G. B. Pierce, *The Soul of the Bible*, p. 98.

It is suggested that this picture, taken in its figurative, not literal, sense, be the one offered to the class as its ideal during the coming year: its way of echoing the writer of the Sixty-eighth Psalm, (v. 19) when he says: "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits."

With this in mind, we shall devote the two holiday lessons which follow to the subject of GIFTS.

LESSON XIV
ABOUT GIFTS
CHRISTMAS LESSON
(I Cor. 12:1, 4, 8-11, 14-23)

The impulse to make gifts is with us at every stage of life. We hear of a new baby and want to give it something. The last honor we pay the dead is to lay a wreath upon the tomb.

Sometimes even an animal will bring an article it values and lay it before another animal, or at the feet of a human being it loves or about whom it feels concern.

The dictionary definition of a gift is that it passes from one person to another "without any other consideration than love and affection." When savages first began to offer gifts to their gods, however, they were probably actuated by a spirit of fear rather than love. They hoped thus to secure the good will of these powerful and capricious beings.

This conception of a jealous, vengeful God, who could be placated by sacrifices, has been very persistent, lasting with some unhappy people even to our own day. One result, in Paul's day, was the religion of the Pharisees, with all its strict observances of the letter of the law, and so little comprehension of its spirit.

Yet, very early in the history of the Jews the idea of gratitude entered into gifts made to God; and also the notion which we are likely to consider a discovery of our own day, that the proper way of showing gratitude to God is by doing deeds of kindness to our fellow-men. Thus, in the book of Esther, (9: 22) we read about the Feast of Purim, which was held to commemorate God's goodness in delivering the people from their enemies. It was a two-day festival, not only of feasting and joy, but "of sending portions one to another and gifts to the poor."

Jesus had much to say about gifts. He used them to illustrate the love of God for his children. "Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Matt. 7: 9-11)

Striking a sterner note he showed that a gift might be lavish, yet worse than useless, if not made in the proper spirit. "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." (Matt. 5: 23-24) The meaning of course is that no offering can be acceptable to God so long as the giver remains consciously unjust toward a fellow man.

Then there is the beautiful story told in Mark 12:

41-44 about the widow's mites, to teach us that the money value of a gift has nothing whatever to do with its real worth.

It is said about Jesus in Ephesians 4:8, (quoting Psalm 68:18) that "he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Indeed, it is almost impossible to imagine how different the lives of this little group of people sitting here to-day would be, had Jesus not made to the world the wonderful gift of the ideals and beliefs for which he so gloriously lived and died.

Since we are studying about the Apostles, let us see what they had to say about gifts.

You remember Peter's answer to the lame beggar near the Beautiful Gate: "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have, give I thee," and how, filled with new courage, the beggar leapt to his feet cured.

In II Corinthians 6:10, Paul describes the apostles as "poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things." They certainly followed the counsel of Jesus, "Freely ye have received; freely give." (Matt. 10:8)

In a great passage, Phil. 4:10-20, Paul acknowledges a sorely needed gift, sent to him in prison from Philippi. Our real lesson for the day, however, is in the twelfth chapter of I Corinthians, in which Paul tells us how we should regard the natural gifts with which God has endowed us. (Class may be called upon to read aloud verses 1, 4, 8-11, 14-23.)

In the second letter to Timothy, the young teacher is admonished to "stir up the gift of God that is in thee." Timothy was perhaps a little inclined to take things easy when it came to a matter of cultivating his own talents. We all know how necessary practice is in order to develop and train a natural gift for music, or any form of athletics, or for cookery, or anything else. Often the necessary practice is a great bore; but in our hearts we know it is the only means by which we can adequately thank God for it.

SUGGESTIONS

PERSISTENT IDEA OF AN ANGRY, JEALOUS GOD. A friend of the writer, the sweetest, gentlest person imaginable, was haunted until she was a woman grown by the terrible God she had pictured to herself as a child,—a gray old man with beard and bushy eyebrows, peering angrily at her from behind walls and around corners, watching to catch her in some trivial sin. She was forever trying to placate him, saying "Now God, if I do so and so, you will *not* be angry with me, will you?" And this in our day!

BIBLE FULL OF REFERENCES TO GIFTS. Some of these gifts are good and some bad. Gifts to kings or judges were made in exactly the same spirit as to the jealous Gods.

"Everyone loveth gifts." Isaiah I:23.

"A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men." Prov. 18:16.

"Every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts." Prov. 19:6.

"He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house, but he that hateth gifts shall live." Prov. 15:27.

"A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it." Prov. 17:8.

"With the Lord our God is no taking of gifts." II Chron. 19:7.

The blessing of God cannot be bought, as Simon the Sorcerer found. There are many striking and charming stories about gifts in the Bible: for instance, the way in which Joseph chose to make himself known to his brethren; the offering of the Wise Men to the baby Jesus; the cup of cold water, and a score of others.

LESSON MOTTO

"Not what we give, but what we share,
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three,
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and me."

—J. R. Lowell. *Vision of Sir Launfal.*

QUESTION, LESSON XIV

Let each of the class be asked to bring and read during the lesson a quotation about gifts, not necessarily from the Bible.

LESSON XV

THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

NEW YEAR LESSON

(I. Cor. 14: 1-3, 5, 13-15, 19-22)

This is really a continuation of last Sunday's lesson.

After mentioning various kinds of gifts Paul said (I Cor. 14: 1) "Desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy."

In ancient Israel a prophet or seer was supposed to know God's will and to proclaim it to the people. While a large part of a prophet's work was religious, an important part of it was political; for the Jews believed they were set apart from other nations, and that therefore no Jew could be really religious without being at the same time patriotic. Indeed, the earliest Jewish idea seems to have been that God dealt with the tribe or nation as a whole, and paid comparatively small heed to individuals. The idea of each man's separate and individual relation to God developed later; while the idea we find in the New Testament, that the kingdom of God is a purely spiritual kingdom, having nothing to do with race or nationality but is made up of good men and

women in all parts of the earth, was a result of Jesus' teaching. In the centuries following his death it spread far and wide, being greatly aided by the life and work of the Apostle Paul.

In ancient Israel there were schools of the Prophets, in which men were trained to become public religious instructors. Most of the great men who are remembered to-day as Prophets of Israel were trained in these schools, but not all of them.

Sometimes the prophets predicted the future; sometimes they talked to the people about the present. They even rebuked the King when they believed he had done wrong, and in that day and place such an act required a vast deal of moral courage.

There were false prophets as well as true ones. Not all of these were insincere. Some merely did not understand. They had learned a set of religious principles by rote and were content to go on applying them mechanically, without taking the trouble to think. Thus they taught what was not right and led their followers into serious error.

The real prophets were men of great minds, who thought deeply and held to high ideals. Even when they predicted the downfall of their nation they emphasized the justice of God.

From the days of Isaiah and Amos, who lived about 700 years before Christ, the Hebrew prophets were also writers.

The change from the old idea that God was more interested in the tribe or the nation to the new one that he dealt with individuals was doubtless aided

by the misfortunes which befell Israel as a nation. It was during the last six hundred years of Old Testament history that the problem of man's personal relation to God was discussed and pondered over. The Book of Job and the Psalms belong to the literature of this period.

In the early Christian Church prophets were considered necessary as proof that the Church had indeed been blessed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Women as well as men might prophesy. Philip had four daughters who all received this gift. The respective degrees of honor in the early church were:

1. *Apostles*, the missionaries of the time, who traveled from place to place, preaching.
2. *Prophets*, who might either travel from place to place like the Apostles, or settle down in one community.
3. *Teachers*, the preachers who remained permanently in one church.

The prophets really enjoyed the greatest liberty of all, local churches having no authority or control over them, since they were supposed to be inspired directly by the Holy Spirit. For almost two hundred years they were held in high honor; but in time so many false prophets appeared that all were discredited. Perhaps it was this great freedom which made the calling so tempting to impostors. For conscientious people, on the other hand, it was no easy calling. *It was the duty of prophets to practice what they preached!*

They might talk about any subject that they felt was for the good of the church to hear. Sometimes, especially in Gentile churches, where a strong pagan influence was at work, a prophet would lose control of himself and fall into a kind of ecstasy, which must have resembled much more the "speaking with tongues" about which we read, than genuine prophecy.

In Paul's time real prophecy meant "reasoned exhortation" which was inspired of God. (Read in class what Paul had to say about this in I Cor. 14:19. Also, from the same chapter, verses 1-3; 5; 13-15; 19-22; and for the effect of prophecy, 23-25)

This lesson seems particularly applicable at the beginning of the year, a time when it behooves each of us to take account of stock, as merchants say,—to think over the past and apply its lessons to the future. Such a look may reveal strange and unexpected things. Whatever we see, we should not allow ourselves to be discouraged or cast down. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind," as we are told in II Tim. 1:7. The Revised Version gives another reading which is equally encouraging:—"power and love and discipline." Is not this verse worth remembering?

Somebody has said that we should live:

By the Past
In the Present
For the Future.

SUGGESTIONS

FOR AN EXAMPLE OF THE PROPHET NOT TRAINED IN SCHOOLS, cite Amos. Read all of the quotation from him in *Soul of the Bible*, pp. 254-255.

ASK FOR SOME MODERN EXAMPLE of a great man who saw things clearly, spoke forcibly, and led his countrymen to better things. Lincoln is likely to be mentioned. The closing sentences of his second annual message to Congress are an excellent example of statesmanship which did not go on thinking old thought in an old way. "The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present," he wrote. "The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise to the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew. We must disenthral ourselves, and then we shall save the country."

Point out to the class in Lincoln's Second Inaugural that confession of national guilt and the righteousness of national punishment, which in its very words as well as in substance might have fallen from the lips of the sternest of the Hebrew Prophets. Immediately afterward comes the wonderful closing paragraph, so full of the love and spirit of service taught by Christ.

PICTURES. Use Sargent's "Prophets" in the Boston Public library.

LESSON MOTTO

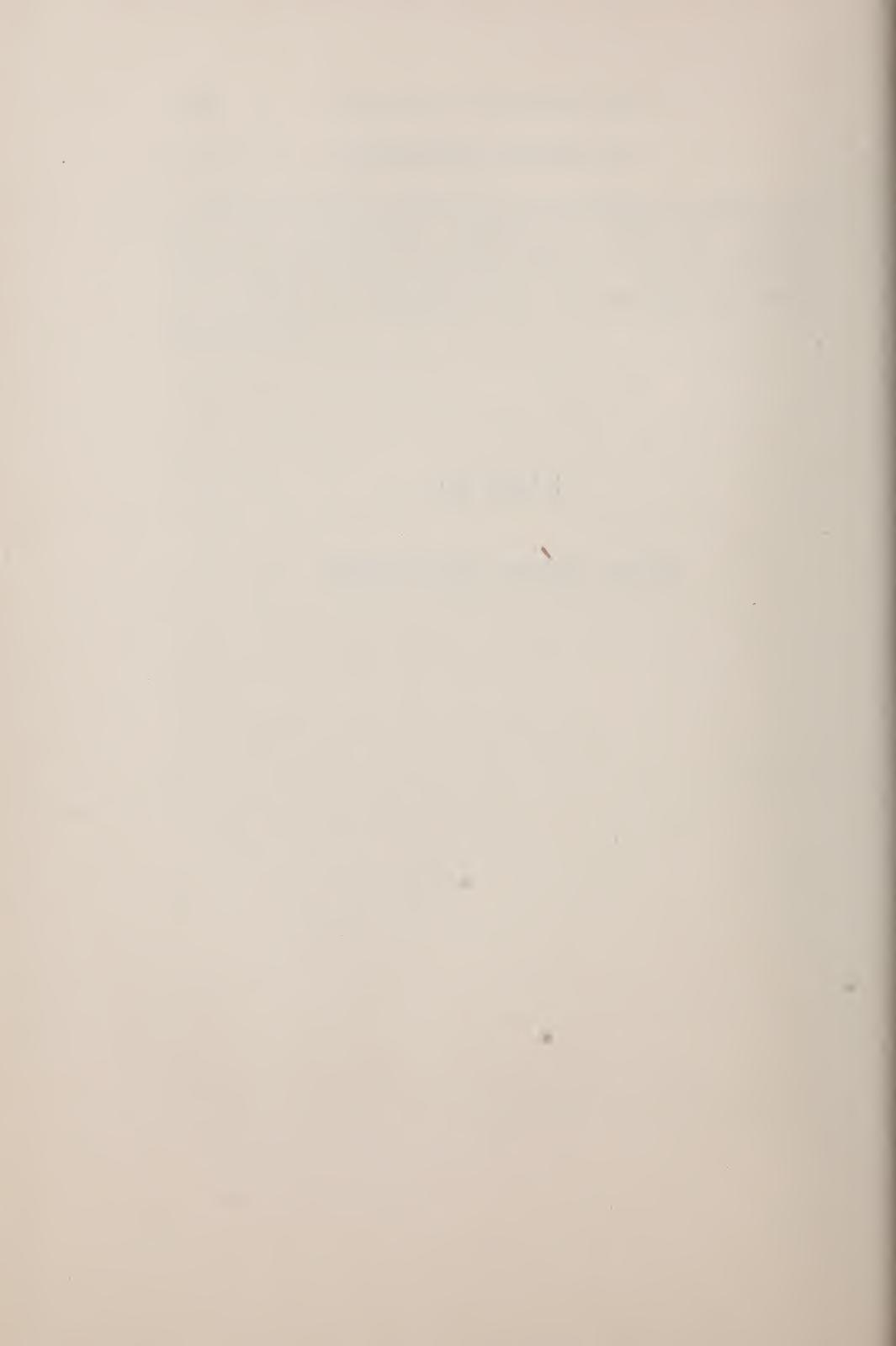
"That which I see not, teach thou me. If I have done iniquity, I will do it no more." Job 34:32.

PAUL: A CHRISTIAN
QUESTION, LESSON XV

Ask for a list of the Major and Minor Prophets of the Old Testament. Explain in class the disappointing distinction between them,—that it is chiefly a matter of quantity, not of quality in their utterances.

PART III

PAUL DOING HIS WORK



LESSON XVI

THE CALL TO SERVICE

(Acts 11:19-30)

(1) We can imagine Paul's astonishment and delight when he looked up and saw Barnabas standing before him; and the question that leapt to his eyes even as he rose to greet him. (2) But it was a law of hospitality in the East to ask no questions of a guest,—to offer him food and water, and let him explain himself. After the dust of travel had been washed away, and Barnabas had eaten, Paul learned in detail what Barnabas had probably told him in three words when their hands first touched: (3) that he needed his help in Antioch, where Jews and Greeks were coming into the church in such numbers that Barnabas could no longer handle the work alone. He remembered Paul's fiery zeal, and had set off to fetch him.

We may be sure Paul needed no urging. He could be ready in an hour. There was little to do beside rolling up the mat on which he slept at night, and filling his water bottle. Anyone who chose might finish the tent upon which he had been at work.

Whether they journeyed by land or water matters not at all. In either case Paul's mind raced far ahead of his body.

(4) The Syrian Antioch was very beautiful with its turreted walls and the five stately bridges spanning the River Orontes. In the river was a pleasure island covered with dwellings of rich nobles, which was a delight to the eye, and inside the walls lay the street that Herod thought the most wonderful in the world: four long miles of white marble colonnades, crossed midway by another great street which led directly to the royal palace. In the square made by the meeting of the two stood a giant statue of Apollo; and out beyond the West Gate could be seen the trees of the famous Grove of Daphne.

There were men of prominence among the Christians of Antioch. Simeon, who was called Niger, a surname meaning black, because of his black hair or black skin (possibly the same man mentioned in Mark 15: 21 as carrying the cross of Jesus); Lucius, who came from Cyrene; and Manaen, who was foster brother of Herod himself. (Acts 13:1) These must have been a little disappointed at first sight of Paul, and have thought Barnabas over-enthusiastic. Barnabas was much the more impressive in appearance, though Paul was by far the better speaker. As yet, however, he lacked practice, and the wisdom which comes only with experience.

Walking Herod's marble street day after day, he saw people of all complexions and races, and noticed that many of the best dressed among them went out through the West Gate to the beautiful grove which, for all its temples and altars, was a most unholy spot. The more he studied their faces the more they

seemed to him to wear the same expression, a hungry, disappointed look as though they were seeking for something they could not find. Paul felt a growing conviction within him that he could show them where to look for true happiness. (5). On their part the citizens would nudge one another as he passed and say, "There goes one of those Christians!" It was in Antioch that this name was first used as a bit of the slang of the day, and not complimentary. The Christians spoke of each other as followers of "The Way."

(6) After Paul had been in Antioch about a year the Church was visited by certain Prophets who came to ask aid for their fellow religionists in Jerusalem. Agabus, their spokesman, "signified by the Spirit" that there was to be a wide-spread famine. This was a case of that clear vision which Paul commended when he wrote (I Cor. 14:19) that he would rather speak in the church five words with understanding than ten thousand in an unknown tongue.

Agabus read the signs of the times correctly. The famine came, and the Christians in Jerusalem suffered greatly. Help went to them from many sources, even from a great distance. The Christians of Antioch gave "each according to his ability," and sent their gifts by the hands of Barnabas and Paul. They probably took wheat and figs and olives with them to be distributed, for money would have helped little in a town where there was no food to buy.

Their task completed, they returned to Antioch,

(7) bringing with them a young relative of Barnabas, John Mark, to whose home Peter had gone after his strange release from prison. Paul and Barnabas had been so successful, and had proved such a good "team" of workers, that the Church at Antioch, which by this time had become the most progressive and flourishing of all the Christian churches, decided to send them out again; not with material help this time, but on a journey to carry messages of good will and encouragement to churches already established, and to found new ones. So this work of mercy, the taking of food to hungry people in Judea, proved the starting point of a much greater work in which Paul and his companions carried spiritual food and comfort to many nations and many millions of people; and exercised an immense influence on the history of the world, not merely in their own lifetime but down through the centuries, even to our own day.

Their missionary journeys occupied years, ten or eleven at least, and covered thousands of miles. (8) Those who made them traveled in various ways, on foot, by horses and asses and camels when they could, and in boats, tiny little things that we should consider hardly seaworthy. There is a verse in the King James version (Acts 21:15) where reference is made to "our carriages" but the Revised Version prints it "our baggage." Much of the way was covered on foot. Travel in that part of the world is uncomfortable today; it must have been very strenuous in Paul's time; and there was actual dan-

ger as well as discomfort. Being a Christian did not tend to lessen either. (Bring the lesson to a close by reading in class II Cor. 11:24-27 to show the perils encountered on these missionary journeys.)

SUGGESTIONS

BARNABAS was the surname of Joseph, "a Levite, a man of God." (Acts 4:36) Greek rendering of his name is "Son of Consolation." Goodness of heart was his distinctive quality. He was leader at first in the missionary journeys. In the struggle with the magician Bar-Jesus on the island of Cyprus, where Barnabas was born, Paul's better intellect brought him to the front, and thereafter in Acts Barnabas takes second place. He was a man of noble appearance. At Lystra the natives called him Zeus, and Paul Hermes. "The legend of his missionary labors in Cyprus, including martyrdom at Salamis, is quite late and untrustworthy." "The Barnabas of history was a greater man than the Barnabas of modern tradition."—*Encyclopædia Britannica*.

Renan in his book *St. Paul* says that Barnabas "made Paul" by fetching him from Tarsus and introducing him into the young active life of the church at Antioch. He is inclined to think Paul a little ungrateful; and that it was not strange they decided to part company. Acts 15:36-40 shows that John Mark, the nephew of Barnabas, was the cause of their final disagreement. Paul did not think him

as zealous as he should have been, Barnabas wished to keep him with them. Having done his work, Barnabas disappears into obscurity.

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Being ready, when the opportunity comes.

LESSON MOTTO

“He toiled and dared, and earned command.”

—Kingsley. *The Mango Tree.*

LESSON QUESTIONS

1.

In the next lesson we take up again the fortunes of Paul. Tell us in a few words where we left him and what he was doing when we saw him last. (Acts 9:30, 11:25)

2.

Acts 11:25 says that Barnabas went to Tarsus to seek Paul who, you remember, was making tents there, and hoping for something interesting to happen. At the end of Lesson 13 Barnabas had just found him. How do you suppose Paul greeted him? Can you tell us anything about Eastern customs in entertaining guests?

3.

In the next lesson we take up again the fortunes of Paul. See if you can discover from the rather confused statement in Acts 11:19-26 just why Barnabas made the journey from Antioch to Tarsus to find him.

4.

What can you tell us about the Syrian Antioch of Paul's

day? I believe a good encyclopædia will yield a lot of information.

5.

What word in common use in all our churches originated in Antioch in Syria? Look for the answer in Acts 11: 26.

6.

After Paul had been in Tarsus seven years Barnabas asked him to help him in the church at Antioch. Can you tell us how long he stayed in Antioch and why he was sent away? See Acts 11: 26-30.

7.

After a time Paul was called to Antioch; and from there he was sent on a mission with Barnabas to Jerusalem. When they returned to Antioch they had with them a young man. Tell us what was his name, and where we have met him before. See Acts 12: 25 and Acts 12: 12. We had the latter reference in a lesson some weeks ago.

8.

I shall call upon you to read in class II Cor. 11: 24-27 to show some of the perils to which Paul was exposed on his long missionary journeys.

LESSON XVII

JOURNEYS "UNDER MARCHING ORDERS"

(See Acts 16:10-17; 20:5, 13; 21:1-18;
all of 27 and 28)

How can you get from here to the door?

How can you get from here to Constantinople?

How can you get from here to Heaven?

No journey, however long, or by whatever mode of conveyance, can be made in any way except by living each minute as it comes, and by doing the next thing to be done,—which usually seems a thing of little consequence. A man may walk thousands of miles; he can only do so by putting one foot a few inches in advance of the other, and keeping everlastingly at it.

Paul was one of the greatest travelers of his day.

He made three great journeys,—four, if we count that trip to Jerusalem. Let us follow them on the map. Each one pressed a little farther toward the west. We will return to that later.

In journeys like these, which covered years of time as well as great stretches of territory, we cannot accompany Paul step by step; but we can consider a few typical incidents, to get an idea of the daily happenings which seemed so commonplace at the

time, yet proved so important. (1) In the first place, we see that the journeys were subject to sudden change of plans. (Acts 16:7-9) Paul had a general plan and an inflexible purpose, but he could change his mind quickly to take advantage of accidents that might help on that purpose. He was not afraid of danger, but did not court it. Sometimes he turned aside to avoid it.

He was a man of *vision*; also of *visions*. There is a wide difference between the two. Vision means the practical sense Agabus showed when he foretold the famine in Judea. He took account of certain facts and reasoned from them as one reasons in mathematics. Two and two make four,—must make four unless something be added or subtracted.

Paul had this kind of vision, but he also had visions, the result of the poetry in his nature and of his supreme faith. The most dramatic of these resulted in his conversion on the road to Damascus. But there were others. One is described in Acts 18:9-10 when God bade him "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace." Another told him to cross over from Asia to Europe. (Acts 16:6-12) Paul's reason recognized the mystical character of these visions; but he regarded them as absolute commands, which he was as much bound to obey as a soldier is bound to obey orders.

Paul often spoke of himself as a "soldier"; and small wonder, considering the kind of life he led. (2) Many times in his writings we come across similes of the fighting man, and the need a Christian

has of the armor of God. It was not always easy for him to follow the strenuous life of a missionary. Jesus himself admitted that though the spirit might be willing, the flesh was weak. Paul appears to have had a wonderful constitution, and unlimited energy and enthusiasm, but he was not physically strong. He was sometimes ill; and he speaks time and again of an "infirmity," a "thorn in the flesh," (Gal. 4 : 13-14; II Cor. 12 : 7-9) the nature of which we do not know. Some believe it to have been epilepsy, others, a trouble with his eyes; others still, a malarial fever which made him absolutely useless while it was upon him.

Whatever it was, he had to take care of himself, which is never easy or agreeable. (3) He frequently used the simile of an athlete; not only in such texts as "I press toward the mark" (Phil. 3 : 14) and "Finish my course with joy," (Acts 20 : 24) but in others about bringing the body into subjection, and being temperate in all things. He had much to say about personal sacrifice of this kind. Romans 7 : 15-20 shows how hard it sometimes was to make himself do what he knew to be right. But he believed the body to be the place where God's Holy Spirit might come to dwell. (4) In Romans 12 : 1 he says: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (5) Service,—still the idea of the soldier, you see.

(6) Like other "soldiers" under marching orders, Paul was liable to change of companions as well as change of plan. (7) After a time he and Barnabas parted company, and Paul and his friend Silas journeyed together. For a while a young man named Timothy did for them the things John Mark had formerly done. Probably today he would be called a secretary. Paul loved him as a son. Then there was a young man of Greek origin, named Titus, who proved a most valuable helper. Sometimes he was left behind to "set in order things that are wanting" and even to ordain local church officers. In other words, he finished up Paul's work when for any reason it seemed best for Paul to push on ahead. Some think Titus may have been a brother of Luke. Col. 4:7-14 and Rom. 16:3-15 give many names of people who were more or less closely connected with Paul in his work.

Best of all, there was Luke himself, who kept a diary, and, it is commonly believed, wrote the Book of Acts, in which he put down, not only his own experiences while traveling with Paul, but all he could learn from others. He is the same Luke who is thought to have written the life of Jesus as told in the third gospel. (8) The portions of Acts known as the "We" sections are the parts supposed to be his diary. They are: Acts 16:10-17; Acts 20:5 and 13; Acts 21:1-18; and all of Acts 27 and 28.

These companions of Paul were "good soldiers," every one of them.

SUGGESTIONS

THE MAP ON WHICH TO FOLLOW PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS should be large enough to show them plainly. When all are traced upon the same map in colored inks, they are much more impressive than when shown separately. In Renan's *St. Paul* (Paris, 1869) there is a very good one. These journeys may be transferred to outline maps and kept in a notebook.

GOOD SOLDIERS. Ask the pupils to write out, in class, six qualities of a good soldier.

TEXTS REFERRING TO SOLDIERS AND ARMOR.

II Tim. 2: 3 "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

II Tim. 2: 4 "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life."

I Tim. 1: 18 "War a good warfare."

I Tim. 6: 12 "Fight the good fight of faith."

Rom. 13: 12 "Let us put on the armor of light."

II Cor. 6: 7 "The armor of righteousness."

II Cor. 10: 4 "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal."

Eph. 6: 11-17 "The whole armor of God" mentioned piece by piece.

TEXTS ABOUT ATHLETICS.

Acts 20: 24 "Finish my course with joy."

Phil. 3: 14 "I press toward the mark."

I Cor. 9: 24-27 "So run that ye may obtain" occurs in this passage.

THE BODY A DWELLING PLACE FOR THE SPIRIT OF
God.

I Cor. 3: 16 "Know ye not that ye are the temple
of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

Rom. 2: 1 "That ye present your bodies a liv-
ing sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is
your reasonable service."

ST. LUKE. The most literary among New Testa-
ment writers and the only one of non-Jewish origin.
(*Ency. Brit.*)

Luke's character may be learned from his writings. A beautiful soul, who wrote what Renan called "the most beautiful book ever written." Like Timothy, Luke seemed created expressly to be the companion of Paul. He had a tender spirit and great pity for frail and suffering humanity.

Paul called him the "beloved physician." (Col.
4:14) He was probably son of a Greek freedman,
—a Roman citizen.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

Choosing and holding fast to essential things.

Men who have accomplished much with frail
bodies. It might be worth while to set the young
folks on a hunt for such. Milton, Parkman,
Roosevelt, who began with sickly bodies and by
"exercise" made them strong, readily occur to
one.

LESSON MOTTOES

"No one could claim with better right to be a sovereign among soldiers!"—Scott.

"Fear not then, thou child infirm."—Emerson.

"Perseverance and mulberry leaf make a silk gown."
—Japanese proverb.

QUESTIONS, LESSON XVII

1.

We know that Paul had a general plan in making his missionary journeys, and that he never relinquished his purpose to preach the Gospel to as many people as possible. But was he able to carry out this plan exactly as he made it? Answers to this are to be found all through the Book of Acts, and in his writings. Acts 16: 6-10 will do as an illustration. How many answers do you find there? Is there a lesson for us in this?

2.

Paul often used the simile of the fighting man, and spoke of himself and other Christians as in need of "armor" etc. Find and read us some of these passages. Romans 13, Ephesians 6, and II Cor. 6 and 10 are good chapters in which to hunt for them.

3.

In Paul's writings he often uses similes and expressions that have to do with athletics. Find and read us some of them. The following chapters are good places in which to hunt for them: Acts 20, Philippians 3, I Cor. 9.

4.

In spite of Paul's devotion and zeal it was not always easy for him to follow the strenuous life of a missionary.

He had a great deal to say about sacrifice. Read us Romans 12: 1, in which he speaks of offering our bodies a "living sacrifice" to God, and states that this is only "reasonable" service. What do you think he meant?

5.

Look up Romans 12: 1 and read it carefully. Then see if you can translate it into something that applies to our daily lives in this 20th century, and to our intercourse with our neighbors. James 1: 26 gives a hint which you might also use in your "translation."

6.

During Paul's long, long years of missionary travels he had many companions and co-workers. Tell us the names of some of them. You can find them by looking through Acts and the Epistles. You will find one important name—possibly more—in each of the following chapters: Acts 11; Acts 15; Acts 16; II Cor. 7.

7.

Tell us what you can find out about Timothy and Titus, two young men who were very dear to Paul. You will find short articles about them in any encyclopædia or biographical dictionary.

8.

Tell us what you can find out about Luke, especially about his friendship for Paul.

The easiest way to get your facts will be to consult a good encyclopædia or biographical dictionary.

LESSON XVIII

ACCLAIM AND PERSECUTION

(Acts 14: 8-20)

Last Sunday we considered the extent of Paul's journeys, and a few of the companions who accompanied him. Today we will take up some of the incidents which they probably looked upon as all in the day's work and annoying rather than important, but which make the story of Paul's travels as exciting as a romance.

The methods of teaching practised by our travellers varied according to circumstance. That was one of the things about which they speedily learned to change their minds.

(1) On reaching a town they were likely to go to the synagogue, where, at a certain point in the service, after the reading of the Scriptures, it was the custom politely to invite strangers who happened to be present to address the meeting. They would not be slow to respond and that would open up the whole subject. Discussion would be aroused among the Jews; the Gentiles would hear about it and send an invitation to Paul and his companions to address them also; there would be conversions and a season of growing interest, followed in almost every

case by scenes of disorder. After that, the missionaries were likely to find themselves in prison if they did not speedily "move on."

In places where there was no synagogue the Apostles sought out some other spot where people gathered. It might be by the river side, or in a crowded market-place. Sometimes they preached to their fellow prisoners in jail; sometimes in the courtroom itself to officers and judges while their cases were being tried.

They preached sermons to their own people too, not to convert, but to comfort and strengthen those who were already Christians. These occasions were not without emotion, (2) as we see in Acts 20:36-37 when Paul took leave of the Ephesian elders. (3) Sometimes there was downright excitement. Read about the over-long sermon. (Acts 20:7-12)

Comparatively early in Paul's ministry he and Barnabas found themselves on the island where Barnabas was born. (4) It was here that the contest occurred with Bar-Jesus, which showed Paul's powers of leadership. (Read Acts 13:6-12.) Notice that in Acts 13 the name Paul is used for the first time. Heretofore it has been Saul.

Then, (5) there is the account of the "special miracles" which led up to the burning of a great pile of books of magic in the square at Ephesus,—a most dramatic happening. (Acts 19:11-20)

More dramatic still was the incident at Lystra, (6) when Paul and Barnabas were in danger of being worshiped as gods, to their intense dis-

tress, (7) (Acts 14:8-18) (8) followed by the quick change of sentiment which nearly resulted in Paul's death. (Acts 14:19-20) This may be made the chief lesson passage, if desired.

It was not a monotonous life! When, at intervals, they returned in safety to Antioch, there was great rejoicing. It did not matter that the Christians gathered in one of the poorest quarters of the city. Their joy was just as sincere as though they were rich and prosperous and the street near their place of meeting blossomed with humble garlands.

SUGGESTIONS

INCIDENTS OF PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS. Some of the most picturesque are withheld for use in other lessons. The aim is to give enough, and those sufficiently varied, to show how adventurous the life was, and how it called for quick thinking and action, and brought out the best of every side of his nature. Refer to *Adventure for God* by Bishop Brent, in treating this side of modern missionary effort.

PAUL'S METHODS OF WORK. He was usually warmly greeted on arrival by the little band of Christians already established, and preached as long as he could. Sometimes several months elapsed before he had to "move on." He healed as well as taught if people came to him who needed the kind of help he could give.

After a time his growing influence would arouse

enmity and complaints would be lodged against him.

RENT HIS CLOTHES. (Acts 14:14) The Oriental peoples are demonstrative, and express their emotions by many symbolic acts. To indicate grief or indignant protest—the latter in Paul's case—it was customary to rend or tear the undergarments. See Num. 14:6; Mark 14:63.

LESSON MOTTO

“Adventures are for the adventurous.”

—Lord Beaconsfield.

QUESTIONS, LESSON XVIII

1.

How did Paul and his companions get their views before the people?

You will find answers in Acts 17:1-5; Acts 17:17; and Acts 16:13. Elsewhere we learn that he preached in jail, and in the courtroom during his trials.

2.

Read us about Paul's farewell to the elders at Ephesus, found in Acts 20:36-37.

3.

Read us about the very long sermon described in Acts 20:7-10.

4.

Tell us about Paul's contest with the magician, Bar-Jesus, recorded in Acts 13:6-12.

5.

Read us about the burning of the books of magic, from Acts 19:11-20.

6.

Tell us how Paul and Barnabas came to be acclaimed gods. Why especially Jupiter and Mercury? See Acts 14: 8-18.

7.

What does the story told in Acts 14: 8-14 mean when it says that Paul and Barnabas "rent their clothes?" There are various references in the Bible to this queer old Jewish custom. See Num. 14: 6; Mark 14: 63.

8.

There is an account in Acts 14: 8-18 about what happened to Paul and Barnabas at Lystra. A second chapter of the same story is told in the next two verses, Acts 14: 19-20. Read them to us, please.

LESSON XIX

WHAT CAME OF IT

(Acts 19: 23-40; 21: 10-14)

Sometimes Paul and his companion were able to stay several months in a place before trouble forced them to "move on." Let us see if we can find out why trouble was so sure to come in the end.

(1) Possibly one reason lay in the fact that the most successful preachers in the new sect, Paul among them, were converted Jews. It was only human nature that the Jews should resent having the bravest and most brilliant of their young men go over to the despised Nazarenes. Very often self-interest on the part of merchants and business men stirred up strife. (2) This appears to have been the case in the rioting at Ephesus, led by Demetrius the silversmith. Read Acts 19: 23-40. (3) Possibly the leaders themselves did not realize what a large part fear of losing trade played in the day's uproar. (4)

When trouble came Paul and his companions would be taken first before the authorities of the synagogue and accused. It was still a Jewish matter entirely. Up to the time of Nero, the Roman law took no notice of Christians as a religious body. "It was as safe to be a Christian as a Jew or idol-

ater, so far as the Roman government was concerned," says G. H. Gilbert. It was only after a disturbance had increased to the size of a small riot that the Roman police would feel it their duty to interfere and restore order, as they would have done in any other street riot. Paul was tried many times before Roman courts, but only once, so far as is known, was he charged in them with being a Christian,—and that time no attention was paid to it! (Acts 24)

Nero put Christians to death on the pretext that they had started the great fire in Rome; but the martyrs who lost their lives in the earlier years of the first century A. D. were victims of religious fanaticism, usually among the Jews, and did not die because of Roman political persecution.

There is an old saying that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. Persecution did not have the desired effect. "Mighty grew the word of God and prevailed." (Acts 19:20) There is something in human nature which nerves itself to resist unjust treatment. We have seen this thing ourselves time and again. During the great war, scarcely a week passed that we were not thrilled by stories of "worthless" men and selfish, silly women who rose to magnificent heights of heroism. They found their great opportunity in cruel injustice. This instinct is so strong that sometimes even an unrighteous cause will flourish for a time if sufficiently persecuted. But in the end it will die out. People may be headstrong, but they are not sufficiently so to suffer continuously in a bad cause.

Nothing, however, can overcome a good cause. If suppressed in one form it reappears in another, and persecution merely tests the worth of a man's ideas. Perhaps that is the reason God allows evil to remain in the world. But this kind of speculation is too deep for us.

Of this we may be sure, however, it is *not actual suffering that counts, but the thing to which one looks forward on the other side of the suffering.* I fancy that even the most devout did not enjoy being burned at the stake; but with the certainty of duty well done, of heaven just beyond the flame, what did they care for a few moments' pain? (5) "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," writes Paul. (Rom. 8:18)

(6) A very picturesque and pathetic story is told in Acts 21: 10-14 about Agabus, the man with the clear vision, who had foretold the famine mentioned in Acts 11. Whether he made a journey to warn Paul of trouble awaiting him at Jerusalem, we do not know, but he met him in Cæsarea and tried to dissuade him from going there. Read Acts 21:10-11.

All this opposition to Christianity very possibly did hasten its general acceptance. In the first century the gospel was doubtless preached in more places than would have been possible had it not been for this constant moving. And the riots and disturbance got it talked about,—gave it "publicity" as we should say to-day.

(7) Paul, with his usual optimism, was sure that "all things work together for good to them that love God." (Rom. 8: 28) "Now I would have you know, brethren," he once wrote when in prison, (8) (Phil. 1: 12) "that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel."

SUGGESTIONS

THE JEWS' ENVY. Acts 13: 45 and 17: 5.

NOT ACTUAL SUFFERING THAT COUNTS. Dentistry may be cited as a very common example of what we bear for the sake of future benefits.

For mistaken values,—there are those decorative welts beloved of South Sea Islanders. These are the result of long and painful processes of tattooing.

Then,—there are high heels!

LESSON MOTTO

"But none of these things move me." Acts 20: 24.

QUESTIONS, LESSON XIX

1.

Can you find passages which indicate that the Jews were jealous of Paul's success? Look in the 13th and the 17th chapters of Acts.

2.

After Paul had persuaded the magicians of Ephesus to burn their books of magic, a riot broke out, led by a silversmith. What was his name, and what did he say? See Acts 19.

3.

Do you believe Demetrius was moved entirely by religious motives, or that anxiety for business made him take the part he did in the incidents described in Acts 19: 23-41? Or was it a mixture of both?

4.

Tell us about the town-clerk and what he said and tried to do during the riot at Ephesus described in Acts 19: 23-41.

5.

What does Paul have to say about the respective merits of suffering and glory? Rom. 8: 18.

6.

Read us about Paul's friend Agabus, Acts 21: 10-14. Have we met him before?

7.

How did Paul feel about the things which happened to him? Rom. 8: 28.

8.

I have asked Number 7 to look up a text which shows how Paul felt about the happenings and misfortunes which befell him. Here is another reference of the same character: Philippians 1 : 12. Please have it ready when called for.

LESSON XX

WOMEN WHO BEFRIENDED PAUL

Sometimes Paul's work in a city was brought to an abrupt close through a chance remark of a well-wisher who had not the faintest notion of doing him harm. Such appears to have been the case with the slave girl whose story is told in Acts 16: 16-24. (Read) It has a note of pathos in it, for the girl was not to blame, neither were the Apostles, yet all suffered. Re-told in modern English it amounts to this: that after the slave girl saw Paul and Silas and became interested in them, she either could not bring herself to practise the tricks she had cleverly worked before, or else a strange hypnotic power left her. People who came to have their fortunes told went away dissatisfied. Trade fell off, her masters were angry, and had Paul and Silas put in prison.

There were other women, many of them, whose friendship had no such disastrous results. We spoke last Sunday of Paul preaching by the riverside. It may have been in the fields, or in a sort of outdoor chapel, roofless and open to the sky, built especially for services of praise and prayer. Such a place is called in the Greek language *Proseuch*. A French writer translates this "oratories" and

tells us that the Jews loved to build them on the seashore or beside a stream, "to have facilities for ablutions."

Very likely it was in such a spot, made comfortable by man and beautiful by the colors of sky and field and trees, that Lydia sat when she first heard Paul speak. (Read Acts 16:13-14) She is said to have been his first European convert. Her name, like Florence or Virginia, was the name of a place as well as of a woman. She came from a town in the territory of Lydia, but was living at the time in Philippi; a comparatively rich woman, a dealer in dye stuffs, or in fabrics and garments colored the wonderful purple, really a rich red, which kings delighted to wear. Not very much is known about her, but the little that is known is distinctly pleasant. She was hospitable, of that we are sure; for after she and her family had been baptized she invited Paul and his friends to make their home with her. Indeed, Luke wrote, "she constrained us."

Her house in Philippi became for that town just what the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, was in Jerusalem, a centre and meeting-place for Christians. Paul appears to have regarded the church at Philippi, of which she was such an important member, with the utmost friendship and confidence. It was to them that he wrote from one of his imprisonments that letter which has been called a "pæan of joy,"—the letter which contains, among other things, that bit of advice (Phil. 4:8) "Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true" and so on,

about which we shall have more to say in another lesson.

There were many other women for whom Paul felt especial respect and friendship. The letter known as II Timothy (1: 5) mentions with real affection "thy grandmother Lois and thy mother Eunice"; and Priscilla, the wife of Aquila, was as much esteemed by Paul and the church, as was her very worthy husband. There are writers who think we have never fully realized the debt Christianity owes to its women converts in the first century.

SUGGESTIONS

WOMEN CONVERTS IN THE EARLY CHURCH. "Those most noble churches (Philippians and Thessalonians), made up from among the best women in each city, were incomparably the two greatest conquests Christianity had yet made. The Jewish women were submissive and retiring; took little part in public worship, and were seldom converted to another faith. . . . The Greek women, weary of goddesses brandishing their spears upon the Acropolis; the virtuous wife turning her back on a wornout paganism, and searching for a pure faith, were greatly drawn to it. Next to the little band of Galileans who followed and served Jesus, Lydia and Phoebe, and the unknown pious women of Philippi and Thessalonica are the real saints to whom the new faith is indebted for a most rapid progress."

—Renan's *St. Paul*, p. 165.

BOOK OF REFERENCE USEFUL IN THE LESSON. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Apostolic Church.*

DEACONESESSES had a wonderful opportunity to carry help and the word of God among the poor and unfortunate. They were called "sisters" as they are to-day. At first they were chosen from among the widows. Later, unmarried women also did this work.

The Christian Church did much to better the position of women. Widows, especially childless widows, had been treated up to that time with little or no respect. "In this new society they might become women of influence, loved like mothers. Christianity made saints of them," says Renan.

PAUL ON WOMEN'S DRESS AND CONDUCT. See I Cor. 11:2-16. This passage, besides the allusions to Priscilla (nearly always mentioned in the New Testament before her husband) and to Philip's daughters, who were prophetesses, shows that women did speak and pray in public Christian meeting. The injunction that they keep silence in the churches (I Cor. 14:34-35) is almost certainly an interpolation by a scribe into Paul's text. The words and the sentiment are not his.

Paul evidently did not approve of women who made themselves conspicuous. It was not customary at that time for women of good position to go unveiled in public,—hence his remarks about uncovered heads. "It was bad enough socially to be a Chris-

tian, without adding to the offense by eccentric behavior.”—Mrs. N. B. Paul.

LESSON MOTTO

“ Those graceful acts
Those thousand decencies that daily flow
From all her words and actions.”

—Milton.

QUESTIONS, LESSON XX

With this lesson the following variation of the usual routine has proved a success: The “question” is given out in this form:

Let us have a little competition next Sunday. Today we will draw lots for sides, four on a side, the object being to see which side can find the largest number of names of women mentioned in Acts and in the Epistles. When we meet next Sunday we will compare our lists, and see, not only which side has the most names, but how the women mentioned fall into groups, such as:

QUEENS AND WIVES OF RULERS.

HISTORICAL CHARACTERS, like the mothers of Abraham’s children, who lived centuries before Paul, but are mentioned by him or by other writers of New Testament letters.

WOMEN OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

Chapter numbers, not verse numbers, are given. You need only look in the chapters indicated, for it would be too much to expect you to search through all of Acts and

all of Paul's letters during busy school days. Even in this way there are a good many references. It is suggested that each side choose a leader who shall divide and assign the tasks and the responsibility. In that way each individual need only be responsible for seven or eight chapters.

There are sometimes several names in a chapter. On the other hand the same people may be referred to in several different places. About a few names you may be uncertain whether they are names of men or women,—all of which ought to make the contest more interesting.

There are some references to women not mentioned by name. We will count these when it is evident that they refer to women of Paul's time.

| Acts 5 | Acts 16 | Romans 4 | II Tim. 1 |
|--------|---------|----------|------------|
| 6 | 17 | 16 | 3 |
| 7 | 18 | I Cor. 1 | 4 |
| 8 | 21 | Gal. 1 | Titus 2 |
| 9 | 23 | 4 | Philemon 1 |
| 12 | 24 | Phil. 4 | Col. 3 |
| 13 | 25 | I Tim. 2 | 4 |
| | 26 | | Hebrews 11 |

The leaders assign one group of references to each individual. In this way each side searches through the entire number.

Most of the lesson period is spent in checking up and comparing the lists brought in; in discussing who is who and what is what.

It is apt to prove lively and to end in a distinctly better acquaintance with the women of the New Testament.

LESSON XXI

PAUL'S LIBERAL MIND

(Philemon, entire)

Paul was naturally broad-minded and generous. He liked people and preferred to believe good things about them. A French writer has said, "He was persuaded that people were naturally Christian, and that the authorities prevented them from following this natural bent."

As a key to this admirable trait of his, we are going to study his letter to Philemon; the shortest and, from a theological standpoint, the least important of his epistles. So unimportant is it, indeed, that it was not even included in early lists of Paul's writings. You have all been asked to read it. Doubtless you thought it stupid. Let us look at it again. Perhaps we may change our minds.

It was long believed to have been written toward the close of Paul's life, while he was a prisoner in Rome. Many scholars believe now that this letter, and also Philippians and Colossians, were probably written from Ephesus. The first thing that strikes us is its cheerfulness. In the course of the letter Paul makes a little joke (did you find it?) and he is so hopeful of regaining his liberty that he asks his

friend Philemon to prepare lodgings for him, i.e. get ready the guest-room.

Philemon appears to have been a well-to-do citizen of Colossæ, about 90 miles from Ephesus, up in the foothills. He owned goods that were worth stealing, and at least one slave, who had apparently taken some of his master's belongings. This slave's name was Onesimus. He had fled, and in his wanderings had in some way come under Paul's influence.

Here we must stop for a moment to consider what slavery meant in that day, or we cannot understand either the letter or Paul's state of mind. "Outside of Palestine," says W. B. Wright, "slavery was universal." Slaves did the work of city and country. Laws afforded them no protection. Indeed, they were scarcely regarded as human. Nobody thought it wrong or unjust for one man to deprive another of his liberty and his earnings. Even Paul seems to have seen nothing vicious in the system. In Col. 3: 22-25 he lays down this rule for servants: "Servants, obey in all things them that are your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord: whatsoever ye do, work heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that from the Lord ye shall receive the recompense of the inheritance: ye serve the Lord Christ. For he that doeth wrong shall receive again for the wrong that he hath done: and there is no respect of persons."

This is the interesting point in Paul's attitude. He believed that a man might be a slave "according

to the flesh" and yet have a soul as good and as well worth saving as the soul of a king; in other words, that all men were equal before the Lord. The usual feeling at that time was very different. People not only scorned slaves,—they were afraid of them. Perhaps it was a case of guilty conscience. There were such vast numbers of slaves that it was thought possible to keep them in subjection only through fear. So they were treated with unbelievable cruelty. While Paul was a prisoner in Rome a slave killed his master, Pedonius, who owned four hundred slaves, many of them women and children. The law ordained that in such a case all the slaves of the murdered man should be slaughtered. A proposal was made to spare the children in this instance; whereupon one of the ablest Senators made an impassioned speech of protest and all four hundred, men, women, and children, were put to death.

Laws not only permitted such treatment of slaves, they were very severe against people who aided runaway slaves. To feed or shelter or conceal one was to incur the penalty of death. Paul knew this well enough, but it made no difference in his treatment of Onesimus. He received him, instructed him, and in time accepted him as a member of the church.

But he also made him see that as a Christian equal of kings he had duties as well as privileges. It was "up to him" to go back to Colossæ and surrender himself to his master; an acid test of character and repentance, for of course the slave had forfeited his life by running away. Even if Philemon magnani-

mously refrained from killing him, he could make life very unpleasant for him. As a slight punishment he might break his legs. Undoubtedly Paul had his own idea of what the Christian master was likely to do; but to make things easier for all concerned, he wrote this letter, which is really charming, and most adroit!

After greetings to Philemon, to his wife, and to the church which met in their home, he passes to tactful praise of the character of Philemon, showing in this way how much he expects. Then he intercedes for the slave; and here comes the little joke. The meaning of the name Onesimus is "profitable": but, as Paul points out in something very like a pun, Onesimus has proved anything but a profitable servant. He suggests, however, that he may have been removed for a season in order that he might return in the new character of a Christian, "not now as a servant, (bondservant, i. e. slave) but above a servant,—as a brother beloved." (Philemon, verse 16)

Paul calls Onesimus his own son. (Verse 10) "If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself" he says. "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee aught, put that to my account." Then, taking the pen from his secretary, (for Paul usually dictated his letters) he adds: "I Paul have written it with my own hand. I will repay it." This made it a legal document in case either side wished to consider it such. But it is clear Paul does not believe Philemon will ever demand payment, since he adds:

"Albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides." Philemon was also apparently one of Paul's converts. Then he sends off the letter by the hand of the slave, "having confidence" he tells Philemon "that thou wilt also do more than I say."

Paul valued his Roman citizenship highly. More than once it served him in good stead; but he did not in the least object to being called a slave of Christ. "I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus," he wrote. (Gal. 6:17) The "marks" are the owner's stamp branded on the slave.

He did not criticise the law of the land or seek to evade it. "We know that the law is good if a man use it lawfully," it is said in I Tim. 1:8. Probably he thought those cruel slave laws had been made in an effort to maintain order. It might have been necessary to execute the Roman slave who killed his master; just as it is thought necessary in most places to execute murderers to-day; but certainly it was not necessary to kill four hundred people, including little children, to avenge one crime, or to keep the slaves in subjection.

Do you not find the letter more interesting now? It shows the justice and breadth of Paul's mind; that he was at once a man of his time and centuries in advance of it.

It is comparatively easy to be liberal-minded about something which does not concern one very closely, in which personal feelings and fortunes are not involved. It was easier for Paul, the free man and

Roman citizen, to see the reciprocal rights and duties of masters and slaves than it might have been had he been a slave himself. But there were other subjects, of very personal concern to him, about which he showed equal breadth of view. Some of these we are to consider in future lessons. He was a man of great sympathy, which made it possible for him to imagine himself in another man's place; a power which helped immensely in his work. It did not blind his judgment of what was true and right, but it did enable him to understand the people among whom he labored.

"Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good," (I Thes. 5:21) was Paul's rule, a rule of the open mind, which is as good today as it was in the year he sent Onesimus back to throw himself upon the honorable mercy of the master "in the flesh" he had so wronged.

SUGGESTIONS

TREATMENT OF SLAVES. Here is another story: "When a certain slave slew with a small spear, single-handed, a boar so fierce that the hunters dared not face it, and thereby saved the lives of some of them, his Roman master had him crucified for carrying a weapon; and Cicero remarked that perhaps the master had been a little harsh, but he would not venture an opinion. When a slave was cut into mincemeat and thrown to the eels for dropping a glass goblet,

no indignation was expressed by the guests at the banquet." Wm. Burnet Wright, *Cities of Paul*, p. 176.

POINTS TO BRING OUT. That Paul believed that both master and slave had duties and responsibilities in the matter.

That Paul's attitude in regard to slavery was far in advance of his own day, but behind that of the 20th century.

His ability to see things broadly and clearly.

Ask class whether they think Philemon did receive Onesimus kindly or harshly. Dr. Clayton R. Bowen says the answer is found in the fact that the letter is printed in the New Testament as a precious possession of Christians.

Show that Philemon and Colossians were written at the same time to the same town. Tychicus carried the letter to the church, and stood sponsor for Onesimus, who bore the note to Philemon. See the kindly reference to Onesimus in Col. 4: 7-9.

READING. Several novels have been written about Onesimus. One of them, *Onesimus*, by E. A. Abbott, might be used at a "party" about this time with interest and good effect.

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Psychological effect upon people of *expecting* them to do right.

LESSON MOTTO

"Virtue could see to do what virtue would, by her own radiant light." —Milton.

QUESTION, LESSON XXI

Next Sunday we are to study Paul's letter to Philemon. Please read it before coming to class; and be prepared to tell us why you think it was chosen for a lesson; and whether it seems to you important.

Any outside information you can bring about slavery in those days,—for instance, whether it was widespread, and how slaves were treated,—will be welcome. Perhaps you can find the story of the way Epictetus was treated by his master.

Because the letter is somewhat obscure, it is only fair to tell you that Onesimus was a runaway slave who had formerly belonged to Philemon.

LESSON XXII

PAUL, APOSTLE TO THE GENTILES

(Acts 15:1-35)

Last time we considered Paul's liberal mind as revealed in his letter to Philemon. It was this same liberality, developing in other ways, which gives him his great place in history,—not alone the history of the Christian church, but of the secular world as well. Our everyday world would be a far different place had the new faith remained what it was at the time Jesus died, a sect of Judaism. Paul's insistence that Gentiles as well as Jews might accept the new faith made a world religion of it.

(1) Jesus had lived and died a good Jew. His purpose had not been to found a new religion, but to purify and spiritualize the old one. After his death his disciples continued his work, chiefly among Jews. But there had been converts to the Jewish faith from among "Gentiles," as the Jews called all "foreigners." Some of these had become as Jewish as possible by fulfilling every detail of Jewish law; others contented themselves with fulfilling a part. All are allowed to worship in the temple, but these last could enter only into its outer courts and were called "Proselytes of the Gate." Some of these, particularly the Greeks among them, took a great

interest in the story of Jesus and his teachings as explained by the Apostles and seemed very ready to become members of this latest sect. The Jews who had become Christians demurred, however, and maintained that only those who had fulfilled every detail of Jewish law might enter the new brotherhood.

It seems absurd now that such a question should ever have been of vital interest. It is a little easier to understand when we remember that for centuries the Jews had looked upon themselves as a chosen people, especially favored of God. Here were interlopers, pushing themselves in and claiming all the benefits of this divine favor, without being prepared to make the customary sacrifices. It was resented as we would resent seeing people claim everything without being willing to pay for their privileges.

The difference at issue between the two parties was a good deal like the difference between our church with its simple service and broad welcome to all, no matter how they may have worshiped before, provided they love God and sincerely desire to make the world better, compared with more formal denominations, which feel that there must be fasts and saints' days, and altars and vestments and candles, for any true worship of God. Most of those leaders in the church who had been born Jews naturally leaned toward the narrower Jewish view. (2) It is true that Peter had his vision upon the housetop, in consequence of which he became for a time more liberal; but he was an impulsive man,

easily influenced by those about him, and on the whole he decided it was best to keep to the conservative side.

On the other hand, Paul, (3) who had been brought up a Pharisee, knew that the law by itself was powerless to make men either religious or merciful. He respected law as much as anyone, (4) but was inclined to interpret it with common sense. (5) Besides, his education in Tarsus had taught him more about the best ideals of the Greeks and Romans than his peasant *confreres* knew; while his sympathetic imagination made it easy for him to appreciate the "barbarian" point of view. He was willing to accept the best from all sources, and to let unimportant details sink into the obscurity they deserved. (6) "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise," he wrote in Romans 1:14; and he evidently felt sure God would be as liberal as himself. (7) "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness." This is a sentiment thoroughly in line with his belief, though it is not likely Paul wrote the words. (II Tim. 3:16) He believed this so fully that when addressing audiences of Greeks he quoted their own poets to confirm the Christian truths he preached. (8) "The letter killeth," he said, "but the spirit giveth life." (II Cor. 3:6)

His strong feeling culminated in a vision which

showed him a man of Macedonia beseeching him to "Come over into Macedonia and help us!" (Acts 16:9) This meant nothing less than: Come out of Asia and tell your story of Christ in Europe. That would be preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles indeed!

We do not know the exact time at which he became convinced that his work was to be among foreigners. One of his speeches indicates that he came to the belief very early in his ministry.

His decided views and actions could not fail to arouse comment. The fifteenth chapter of Acts informs us that Paul and Barnabas had dissension and disputation with the conservative party; and that on their return from their first long missionary journey they were called to a conference at Jerusalem to give an account of themselves. Paul's description of this gathering, in Gal. 2:1-10, is more accurate than that in Acts 15. Many of the notable men of the church were there to hear them speak. Warm-hearted Peter rose and recounted again his vision upon the housetop, and ended by asking the conference in so many words. "Why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples?" (Acts 15:10) "Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them." (Verse 12) James, the brother of Jesus, who presided at this conclave, summed up the sense of the meeting to be "that we trouble not

them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God" by laying unnecessary commands upon them. (Acts 15:19)

So Paul went out upon his second missionary journey feeling that he had the approval of the church authorities as well as of his own conscience.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

Difference between letter and spirit.

How much Paul's early life in Tarsus had to do with permitting him to understand the Gentile point of view.

LESSON MOTTO

"For as many as are led by the spirit of God, these are sons of God." Rom. 8:14.

QUESTIONS, LESSON XXII

1.

Christ started a new religion; but in thinking over what you have learned about his life, do you believe he ever thought of himself except as a loyal Jew, observing all the necessary Jewish laws and commandments?

2.

Recall to us in a few words Peter's vision on the house-top. You remember we studied it in a lesson about Thanksgiving time. See Acts 10:9-16.

3.

Can you tell us in what Jewish sect Paul had been trained?

4.

Because of Paul's upbringing he had an intimate acquaintance with Jewish law. So had other writers of New Testament epistles. What does I Tim. 1:8 say about law?

5.

We read in I Tim. 1:8 that law was good if used lawfully. What did Jesus say to show that he also thought laws and rules were not to be considered an end in themselves, but merely a means to an end? His words are found in Mark 2: 23-28.

6.

Being better educated than the majority of the apostles, Paul could see the good in other kinds of learning as well as in the lore of the Jews. What did he say about his debt to the learning of other races? See Romans 1: 14.

7.

I have asked Number 6 to look up a reference in Romans to show how Paul regarded the learning of other races than his own. Here is another reference bearing on the same subject. Please have it ready when called for. II Tim. 3: 16.

8.

What do you think Paul meant when he wrote: "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life"? II Cor. 3: 6.

LESSON XXIII

“ALL THINGS TO ALL MEN”

(I Cor. 9: 19-23; Gal. 2: 7, 8; Acts 18: 24-28)

(1) The Mosaic Law as we have it in the Old Testament was by no means all of the law by which the Jews regulated their daily life. (2) There were the traditions of the elders and the teachings of the rabbis. This material was later put in written form and known as the Talmuds, of Jerusalem and of Babylon, full of minute rules about every imaginable thing:—about the kinds of food which might be eaten and the kinds that must not be touched; how far a man was permitted to walk on the Sabbath day; what he might do with the top of a ladder on that day, provided the bottom was not moved from its place upon the ground, and a thousand equally trivial details which made life difficult and complicated for zealous Pharisees.

(3) To Paul such things seemed of no consequence at all. He had a good deal to say about the liberty he enjoyed through his belief in Christ; (4) but he was very careful to draw a distinction between what it was lawful for him to do, and what it was wise and best to do. (I Cor. 6: 12) Which, being translated into unscriptural words of common sense and social courtesy, and applied to ourselves, (5) simply

means that we should have due consideration for the people with whom we come in contact,—even for their prejudices,—and take mighty good care not to do anything which will make it harder for them to live the kind of life they ought to live.

"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient," Paul writes. (I Cor. 10: 23) He is very specific. In the 27th verse of the same chapter he gives a rule for behavior when going out to dinner. "If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake." "But," he adds, immediately, "if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not, for his sake that showed it." And in Romans: "For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence." (Rom. 14:20) "I know and am persuaded . . . that there is nothing unclean of itself; . . . But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably." (Rom. 14 : 14-15) "Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." (Rom. 14:13)

(6) Paul's own personal rule of conduct he explained in I Cor. 9:19-23. "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law that

I might gain them that are under the law: to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake.” (7)

This phrase “All things to all men” has become so interwoven with the memory of Paul, that the words leap to mind whenever his name is mentioned.(8)

As time went on he devoted himself more and more to work among the Gentiles, while Peter labored among the Jews. “The gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter,” he wrote. “For he that wrought effectually in Peter . . . the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles.” (Gal. 2: 7, 8)

Other preachers had large followings. The Church in Corinth split into various factions, each upholding a favorite teacher. One of these factions championed Paul, another Apollos, an eloquent Jew of Alexandria, who had become a follower of John the Baptist, and was converted and instructed by Priscilla and Aquila. (Acts 18: 24-28) Paul has a good deal to say about him in I Cor. 3. Paul was broad-minded enough not to care who got the praise so long as God’s work was done. “Who then is Paul,” he wrote rather impatiently, “and who is

Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed? . . . I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."

And again: "What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." (Phil. 1: 18) They appear to have differed in opinion at times, as well as in styles of oratory, as we see in I Cor. 16: 12.

SUGGESTIONS

ALL THINGS TO ALL MEN. At one time Paul deliberately associated himself with a band of Jews who were under a vow to sacrifice daily in the temple for a certain number of days. He did not wish to be thought an enemy of their religious practices.

APOLLOS. Contracted from Apollonius. An Alexandrian Jew who, after Paul's first visit to Corinth, worked there. Later he was with Paul at Ephesus. He spoke and taught with power and success, (Acts 18: 24-28) and may have captivated his hearers by teaching wisdom in the allegorical style of Philo. Evidently he was a man of force and magnetism. Martin Luther and others believed him to be the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. (*Encyclopædia Britannica.*)

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

Consideration for the feelings of others.

LESSON MOTTO

"Be many-sided, but four-square with the world."

—Theodore Roosevelt.

QUESTIONS, LESSON XXIII

1.

Can you tell us in what books of the Bible we may find the old Jewish law?

2.

In addition to the Law of Moses, the lives of the Jews in Bible times were regulated by a great mass of rules and customs. Can you tell us what these were called? Look in any good encyclopædia under "Talmud." This will probably give you two other names of six letters each, one beginning with M and one with G.

3.

Can you tell us how Paul felt about his own obligation toward living strictly according to the Jewish law? See I Cor. 6:12.

4.

Did Paul feel that because he had a right to do certain things if he chose, he was at liberty to do them? See I Cor. 10:23.

5.

In I Corinthians 10:24 there is an admonition which reads in the King James version, "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." In the Revised Version it is given "Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good." Which do you think is as Paul meant it to be?

6.

What do you think Paul meant when he said "I am made all things to all men?" (I Cor. 9:22)

7.

In Romans 14: 7 and 13 we find a thought that Paul seemed to consider very important. Does it seem to answer rather directly the question Cain asked in Gen. 4: 9?

8.

Jesus taught in his parable of the steward and his servants that "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." Is this the lesson that Paul teaches in Romans 15: 1? How does he put it?

LESSON XXIV

“CALL TO REMEMBRANCE THE FORMER DAYS”

(*Note.* This lesson was prepared for use on February 22d. If not desired at that time, the portion relating to the Epistle to the Hebrews may be used with Lessons 32 and 33)

For this patriotic anniversary we take our lesson from the Epistle to the Hebrews, because it contains so many verses and words that have to do with history,—words which might indeed almost have been written about Washington himself.

But first let us consider the book as a whole. (1) Nobody knows the name of its author, or exactly when it was written. It has been called “a literary riddle.” Though printed with Paul’s epistles, it is quite certain that Paul did not write it; and equally certain that the person who did write it was a man of piety and brains and experience. It is believed that it was written to the Christians in Rome probably toward the end of the First Century, by a brilliant and scholarly teacher well known to them, though his name has been lost to us. At that time the Church in Rome was in need of just such a message to arouse its eagerness and confidence, and nerve it to meet a second period of persecution which was soon to come upon it.

Hebrews contains some of the most beautiful and

effective passages to be found in all this section of the Bible. They begin indeed with its very first verse: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets," or as the Revised Version has it, "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners." And the book ends with that beautiful apostolic benediction we so often hear pronounced at the end of a modern church service: "Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep . . . make you perfect in every good thing to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight." . . .

The whole book is an argument to show how superior the Christian way of belief is to the old law of Moses; but how, really, it is no new or revolutionary thing, only a development and outgrowth of that law, which was fulfilled and came to its natural end when Christ was born.

This argument is upheld by many references to history. (2) As we have already learned, citing history was a favorite method of argument with the Jews. You remember, back in Acts 5:34-39, how the good priest Gamaliel, Paul's beloved professor, advised against persecuting the new sect of Nazarenes, and recalled incidents of Jewish history to show that the teaching of false prophets, left to itself, would die out because there was no good in it.

If we look through the early chapters of Acts (3)

we find in almost every summary of a sermon by Peter or Stephen or Philip, that they cited history to prove their points. Paul did it constantly; and in this book of Hebrews, by an unknown writer, there are more than fifty quotations from the Old Testament, more from the Prophets than from either the Psalms or the books of the Law.

The idea underlying all this appeal to the past is that history, being the record of what men did and what happened to them, shows God's dealings with the human race. (4) "Every house is builded by someone; but he that built all things is God," says this writer in Hebrews 3:4. (5) The same thing is expressed in II Timothy, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction," (II Tim. 3: 16) and in Romans: "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope." (Rom. 15: 4)

If the ancient Jews had reason to recall their history for comfort and warning, it behooves us no less to recall ours. And looked at in this sense our history goes back a long way.

Paul, for instance, had much to say about the glorious liberty of the sons of God; but he did not say one word to show that this liberty which made a true Christian independent of riches and position and even of prison bars, did anything to free him from responsibility toward his fellow men. Another of Paul's ideas was that kings and slaves were equal

in the sight of God. That idea is accepted now by all Christian nations, in theory at least, though in practice there are still many actions which show how far we are from our ideal. But about 1500 years rolled by after the death of Paul, and after the Epistle to the Hebrews had been written, before any considerable body of men undertook the experiment of governing a nation according to this Christian notion of equality,—the idea that poor and rich had certain equal rights. When they did try it they had to manufacture a new nation for the purpose. So, by a long but not illogical road, we come to our own American history, which we should not fail to “call to remembrance” on this day of all days in the year.

Did it ever occur to you what a miracle the winning of our American War of the Revolution was, looked at purely from the worldly point of view? At that time there were not as many white people in the whole region from Maine to Florida as now live in New York City. The few actually here were not near together, either in body or in mind, but were scattered in little isolated groups from New England down to the northern limit of Florida, each group living by itself in a wilderness, through which there was scarcely any means of travel. It was not harmless empty wilderness either, but was infested by savages whose enmity was terrifying.

Worse still, for purposes of making a new nation, the interests of these little groups were not at all the same. New England's prosperity depended

upon fisheries, and upon her trade with Europe. The South raised tobacco, and cared nothing for the fish off the Banks of Newfoundland. So, the laws and regulations which were beneficial to one region were positively harmful to another. All that the different colonies held in common were "lacks." There was hardly a manufactory in all America. When the war began the colonies had practically no supplies for carrying on their campaigns: no cloth to clothe the soldiers; no ammunition for their guns. Indeed they had no soldiers in the modern sense, for the men came together voluntarily, for very short periods of time, then melted away again. The size of Washington's army at one day was no guide whatever to the number of men he might expect to answer roll-call two or three weeks later.

And these people had set out to win their freedom from the most powerful nation of Europe, owning the greatest navy on earth!

Truly, the winning of that war was a triumph of faith. Faith of Washington in his men; faith of commander and men in their ideals. But how sorely that faith was tried, and how near, many times, they came to failure, possibly high-school students have not yet had time to find out. It is a thrilling story; and even with the visible proof of our great nation before us, it sometimes seems incredible that it could have happened as it did.

Like the early Christians, those who first took an interest in the revolutionary movement and

joined it were mainly poor people who had little to lose in any event, and much to gain if the cause succeeded. The well-to-do, who had most to venture, held back. Washington, however, was one of the richest men in the colonies. He risked everything, and had apparently little to gain. He was convinced of the righteousness and justice of his cause, as Paul had been of his, and thinking only of that, he took a big chance, with the possibility of losing life itself.

(6) The success of the Revolution was due in large measure to Washington's patience and steady perseverance in the course he thought right. (7) People murmured against him, just as they murmured against Moses, and against every great leader who has led his nation through trials.

In the Bible, and all through secular history, we read stories about men and nations who are spoiled by success,—who become selfish and unmindful of their obligations to others after some great blessing has come to them. It was to correct this tendency in human nature that the old Jews laid such stress upon reading and remembering history. (8) This is one of the Jewish practices that we would do well to imitate.

SUGGESTIONS

WASHINGTON'S LIBERAL RELIGIOUS VIEWS. Writing to Lafayette, Washington confessed that he was quite willing to allow others to follow "that

road to Heaven which to them shall seem the most direct, easiest, and least liable to exception."

PATIENCE. Lay stress on Washington's patience; and upon patience as an element in success. Several of the texts assigned in the lesson questions have to do with patience.

Here is what Franklin said about patience: "He that can have patience can have what he will."

An Oriental proverb: "Patience and a mulberry leaf made a silk dress."

An Arabian Proverb: "Patience is the key of relief."

DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS. The passages referred to in lesson questions 6 and 7 are, respectively, Heb. 6:13 and Heb. 7:4. If questions such as these are considered ill-advised, an Old Testament reference to Moses the Leader may be substituted for number 6, and for number 7 a parallel or a contrast between Moses and Washington may be asked for.

LESSON MOTTO

"By the work we know the workman."—La Fontaine

QUESTIONS, LESSON XXIV

1.

Does anybody know who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews? What is its probable date?

You can find the answer in a good encyclopædia.

2.

Jewish preachers seem to have been in the habit of quot-

ing Scripture—not alone the Law and the Prophets, but the historical books as well. Had Paul been taught to do this? Reasoning from what we find in Acts 5, where Paul's teacher Gamaliel is quoted in regard to another matter, it seems fair to assume that he used the same methods in conducting his classes.

3.

Please run through the first thirteen chapters of Acts and see how many of the great teachers, like Peter and Stephen, quoted Jewish Scriptures or referred to some bit of Jewish history in their sermons.

4.

We find expressed in many places in the Bible the idea that history is the record of God's dealings with men. See if you can find this idea (in figurative language) in one of the early verses of the third chapter of Hebrews.

5.

In the last part of the third chapter of Second Timothy, and in the first part of the fifteenth chapter of Romans, is expressed the belief that the study of history is a good thing. See if you can find the two references, and have them ready to read when called for.

6.

Not because anything in Hebrews could have been written with George Washington in mind, but because it is an interesting thing to do on the 22d of February, please look through the sixth chapter of Hebrews and see if you can find a verse which might be applied to what happened to him.

7.

See if you can find anything in the first part of the

seventh chapter of Hebrews which might serve as a description of George Washington.

8.

In reading history we come upon many stories of individuals and even of nations who are spoiled by success,—who are selfish and forgetful of others after some great good fortune has come to them. Perhaps it was to correct this tendency that the Jews laid such stress upon studying and remembering history. How do you think a study of Washington's personal character should affect those who learn about him?

PART IV

“IN PERILS OFT”

LESSON XXV

THE EARTHQUAKE

(Acts 16:16-40)

We are not trying to learn what happened to Paul's body so much as to find out what happened inside his mind,—to study his character. No story about him is more illuminating in this regard than the one told in Acts 16: 23-40. (Read)

That an earthquake could loosen chains and open prison doors is hard to believe when one thinks of prisons such as we have in the United States. It is, however, fairly easy if it is a Turkish prison one has in mind. The doors of the building in which Paul was confined were probably merely fastened by a wooden bar. The earthquake forced the door-posts apart; the bar slipped from its sockets, and the doors swung open, there being nothing to hold them in place. It was customary to fasten prisoners to the stone wall; and the stocks and the chains would become detached. Earthquakes play all kinds of strange pranks.

The question naturally arises, why did not any of the prisoners run away? Professor Ramsay, whose *St. Paul, the Traveller and the Roman Citizen*, pp. 220-225, is most helpful in preparing this lesson, explains that the minds of oriental and west-

ern races seem to work differently. An earthquake strikes panic and terror to a semi-oriental mob. The opportunity is over before they can gather their wits together. Paul and Silas, men of a higher order of intelligence, were not in the habit of running away.

Another question arises. If it all happened at night, in darkness so intense that the jailer had to call for lights, how could Paul see the jailer and know that he was about to kill himself? The explanation to this is that the inner prison in which Paul and Silas were confined was a small cell without door or window except the opening into the larger prison. That had one big door in its outer wall, opposite Paul's cell. Even in the faint starlight, and still more if the moon were shining, a person in the inner room, accustomed to its obscurity, could see a man silhouetted in the outer doorway and yet be himself quite hidden in the blackness of the inner cell.

After his conversion the jailer took Paul and Silas to his own house. In doing this he was not overstepping his authority. He was responsible for the prisoners, and must produce them when called for, but meantime he could keep them where he thought best.

As for the sudden change of manner on the part of the *prætors*,—perhaps their superstitious fears had been aroused,—perhaps their consciences. “The weakness of municipal government in cities of the *Ægean* lands was always a menace to order.”

Such magistrates were not likely to be men of high principle. They would wish to avoid unpleasant inquiries by inducing the innocent weaker party quietly to leave the city. Paul and Silas, however, refused to depart without vindication. They had played fair, and had a right to demand fair treatment in return.

SUGGESTIONS

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE. That Paul and Silas kept their true sense of values.

They were true to their conception of duty,—and this impressed the jailer.

The jailer, on his part, was doing his duty.

The prætors were abusing their power; hence the difference in Paul's manner.

Cheerfulness of Paul and Silas under trying circumstances,—in the stocks, and in pain.

Serenity amid the horrors of the earthquake.

Speed with which they turned from the mere trifle of a reeling world to their own particular job of evangelization.

Their lack of vindictiveness. Their instant effort to save the life of the jailer, even before they knew his attitude toward themselves.

The heartiness and simplicity of their response when he appealed to them for advice.

Yet in their answer to the authorities they stood upon their rights.

LOCAL COLOR. In Basil Mathews' *Paul the Daunt-*

less, pp. 193-198, this experience is very well told, with much explanatory detail skilfully interwoven. The word-pictures are of great help. Slightly condensed, the whole passage may be read in class.

“WENT TO THE HOUSE OF LYDIA.” Acts 16:14 tells us that Lydia was “a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira.” She became a warm friend of Paul’s. There are many legends and conjectures about her. Some believe her to have been the first convert in Europe. There is a legend that she became Paul’s wife.

LESSON MOTTOES

“Know your opportunity.”—Pittacus, one of the seven wise men.

“Pardon is the choicest flower of victory.”—Arabian.

QUESTION, LESSON XXV

It is suggested that there be only one question, given to all the class. The answers will be varied, and will open up plenty of subjects for discussion. It may be as follows:

The next lesson will be found in the sixteenth chapter of Acts from the twenty-third verse to the end of the chapter. Each member of the class is asked to read it carefully, and really think about it. Next Sunday each in turn will be expected to say what appears to be the most important thing in the story.

Please come prepared to talk about it in class for two or three minutes. It is not necessary to limit the talk to the little that can be gleaned from Acts. Anything bearing on the subject that you can bring from other sources, for ex-

ample, about Roman citizenship, or military customs, or manners of the time, or about the states of mind exhibited by the different characters in the story, will be "thankfully received."

LESSON XXVI

PAUL, THE PUBLIC SPEAKER

(Acts 17: 16-34)

Paul was the one Christian teacher of those early days about whom a book was written, yet our knowledge of him is only fragmentary. We know, for example, that he lived for two years in Rome in his own hired house, and was allowed to receive and talk with people freely, though nominally a prisoner. (Acts 28: 30-31)

Ten of the first fourteen years after his conversion are practically a blank, so far as the record goes. We only know what he tells us in Gal. 1: 17,—that he went into the desert of Arabia to think things over. Then, after a short period of preaching in Damascus and Jerusalem, that he was obliged to flee to Tarsus, where he remained until Barnabas sought him out. What he did and said during all this time we are not told. We may be sure he was learning lessons which were to be of use to him later on. This season of seclusion appears to have been for him what a course in a theological school is to a preacher to-day,—his time of preparation.

Paul had a great deal to learn about holding his temper and emotions in check. “His self mastery

was an acquired grace," says one writer. But a hot temper is not an unmixed evil, provided its owner knows what to do with it. Paul had unbounded energy, an ardent nature, a warm heart, and quick alternations of mood. He could both feel and inspire friendship of the highest order; was in short a most interesting person. He was the kind of man you could not help loving, though for an hour, or even a day, he might exasperate you almost beyond endurance. It has been said that his hearers might either fight him or be converted by him. The one thing they could not do was to ignore him.

During his missionary journeys, occasional notes were made of his speeches, very possibly in short-hand since that was used by the Romans; but only five short summaries have come down to us. From these, however, it is possible to piece together an idea of how he spoke, and how his words affected his hearers.

When he started out with Barnabas upon the missionary journeys, he was a middle-aged man, rather short and small, according to tradition, somewhat bald and not particularly handsome. But there is nothing in Acts or in his letters to prove that he was physically repulsive, as some affirm. Both in Acts and in his letters we find references to some form of affliction to which he was subject, but what it was we do not positively know. What it was does not in the least matter, but the indications point to epilepsy. We know that he did his work in spite of it; and the fact that he accomplished so

much, with a handicap, makes his example the more heroic and inspiring.

One theory is that he had a disease of the eyes, which made it impossible for him to recognize persons even when quite near him, and which gave him a hideous stare. Luke does not say anything to confirm such a surmise. On the contrary, one instance of Paul's great power recorded by Luke, begins with the statement that Paul “fastened his eyes” (Acts 13:9) upon a man; and scholars tell us that the word Luke used means that Paul's soul seemed to look through his eyes.

He appears to have used a good deal of gesture. He showed the Ephesian elders “these hands”; (Acts 20:34) and beckoned with his hand when he stood up in the synagogue at Antioch to beseech the “men of Israel and ye that fear God” to hear him. (Acts 13:16) In addressing King Agrippa in the hall of the Roman governor at Cæsarea we are told that he “stretched forth his hand.” (Acts 26:1) It was evidently a characteristic and scarcely conscious act. When more restraint was likely to produce greater effect no mention is made of gesture; he evidently had himself under good control. But at Lystra, where he and Barnabas found themselves in danger of being worshiped as gods, he showed his distress in the excitable manner of his race; he “rent his garments.”

The greatest factor in his success, however, was his earnestness. The Arabs have a proverb “A

word from the heart reaches the heart. A word from the tongue reaches only the ears."

Not only his words but his acts were eloquent. It was what he did more than what he said which converted the jailer on the night of the earthquake. But it cannot be denied that he had an eloquent and at times a prolonged flow of words. There is a record of one sermon which lasted all night. (Acts 20: 7-12) However, Paul had some excuse. He was bidding friends goodbye, expecting never to see them again. That he could talk convincingly to hostile audiences as well as to friends we may be sure, or that bonfire of books of magic upon the public square at Ephesus would never have been lighted. (Acts 19: 19)

He was a persistent speaker, not to be silenced by a little opposition. When he was no longer welcome in the synagogue at Ephesus he hired a lecture-room of one Tyrannus (Acts 19: 9) where he held daily discourse for about two years. Though he followed without wavering the injunction given him in one of his visions "Be not afraid, but speak" (Acts 18: 9) he was sympathetic, and far too much of a gentleman merely to abuse the beliefs of those who heard him. He knew it was better to persuade than to denounce; that it was only fair to treat his hearers politely, and to give them the benefit of every possible doubt. He shared the Jewish horror of idols, and thought it wicked to make an image or a picture of God; but he was gentleness itself if he

could detect the least glimmer of seeking after the real God. His most famous speech, which you have been asked to commit to memory for the lesson to-day, shows this. (Acts 17: 22-31) Let us try to imagine the scene as he made this speech.

(After spending a little time with map and photographs and descriptions of Athens, have the speech read or recited; and bring the lesson to a close with a summary of Paul's qualities as an orator.)

SUMMARY OF PAUL'S QUALITIES AS A SPEAKER

He spoke out of his heart to the hearts of men.
Used every bit of his wide and varied knowledge.
Made many historical allusions after the manner of educated Hebrews.

Did not disdain the phrases of the moment, even the slang of the market place.

Used bold figures of speech.

“Was supremely skilful in interpreting the Gospel into everyday life.”

Said of himself that he never planted his blows “as one who beats the empty air.” (I Cor. 9: 26)

SUGGESTIONS

MAPS AND DIAGRAMS. Use not only a map of Athens and surroundings, laying emphasis on the deep valleys within the town (in one of which the Furies were said to dwell), but make

in class a simplified outline of the walls of the city and the chain of heights within it, upon one of which stood the Parthenon, on another the Areopagus. These two, with the Agora, the theatre and the Temple of Zeus; and outside the wall the Stadium, and the position of Mt. Hymettus, will give the class a working outline of the topography very helpful in placing any photographs that may be available. There are maps and diagrams in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* from which simple tracings can be made.

ATHENS AT THE TIME OF PAUL'S VISIT. The city had already lost much of its political and intellectual prestige, but was at the height of its material splendor. Having to wait several days for the arrival of Silas and Timothy, Paul probably visited every portion. In the centre rose the stately Acropolis crowned by the Parthenon, which Paul, as a lover of good architecture, must have admired. Below the Acropolis, to the southwest, was the Agora, or Market Square, centre of the city's commercial and intellectual life. On the west stood the Royal Porch, in which the court of the Areopagus held its sessions. The Hill of Mars upon which the Royal Porch was built, had originally been separated from the Acropolis by a deep and narrow chasm. As Paul was a lover of athletics as well as of architecture, he probably made his way quickly to the great new stadium on the hills to the east, where the Pan-Athenaic games were held; but he seems to have spent most of his time in the Agora, fascinated by its activity.

THE SHOPS. There appear to have been in the commercial district two-story arcades, each story with its little row of open booths, like the shops in Eastern towns of the present day, facing a covered passage. The suggestion that these might be looked upon as ancestors of the modern department store, may not be archeologically sound, but it serves to bridge a gulf of centuries in the young mind, and to bring the business life of Athens quite near.

THE MARKET PLACE. It served as a sort of club. People met to exchange ideas as well as to buy and sell.

EPICUREANS. Believed in enjoying all sorts of good things; in rational happiness. “We cannot live pleasantly without living wisely and nobly and righteously.”

STOICS. Repressed bodily feeling and desires, in order to cultivate the mind.

THE RELIGION OF ATHENS. Renan says that it was “municipal and political;” based on myths of the foundation of the city. That it was “a consecration of the patriotism of its inhabitants.” The Jewish religion has been called “consecrated patriotism.” Perhaps Paul felt this underlying similarity.

THE MANY ALTARS. Athenians saw the divine mystery in almost every object, and took no chance of offending any god by overlooking him. For fear of missing one because they

did not know his name, they raised an altar "To the Unknown God." A Roman writer said it was easier to find a god in Athens than to find a man.

"AS CERTAIN ALSO OF YOUR OWN POETS HAVE SAID."

The idea that men were God's children was by no means an exclusive possession of the Christians. Aratus, a Greek who lived between two and three hundred years b. c., wrote:

"Zeus fills the city streets
Of the nation's crowded marts; fills watery deeps;
· · · · ·
His children are we. He, benignant,
Raises his signals, summoning man to toil,
And warning him of life's demands."

The author of the following Hymn to Zeus was Cleanthes, pupil of Zeno.

"O God most glorious, called by many a name,
Nature's great king, through endless years the same;
Omnipotence, who by thy just decree
Controlllest all; hail Zeus, for unto thee
Behooves thy creatures in all lands to call,
We are thy children. . . ."

THE AREOPAGUS. In earlier days the court of the Areopagus had regulated morals and education. It had condemned Socrates to death on the charge that he introduced the wor-

ship of new gods. It still exercised supervision over the lecturers who were allowed to present their views in the Agora. Paul was not brought before it on a definite charge, but was allowed to present his new teachings in order that the court might determine whether it was proper to allow him the privilege.

PAUL'S SPEECH. He mingled with the throng who were confirmed “lecture-tasters,” and appears to have attracted attention both by his looks and words. On his part he could approve of much in the dissertations he heard, with their strong emphasis on the moral life, and their hint of one supreme god back of all natural phenomena. The scene of his address was probably near the Royal Porch. Prof. Ramsay points out that there was nothing in his reported words at Lystra or at Athens that several Greek philosophers might not have said, if we except one expression, “the man whom he hath ordained.”

His introductory words indicate that he had not only judges and philosophers in his audience, but also the Athenian mob, characterized by the university folk as “worthless pickers up of scraps of learning.” The attitude of the university men toward Paul appears to have been thoroughly contemptuous. Here was a voluble Jew who promised them entertainment.

Paul adjusted himself to his hearers with marvellous skill, meeting them on the one point of contact, the common ground of universal religion.

Then he skilfully led up to appreciation and acceptance of his own point of view. His method, like that of Jesus, was positive and constructive, not negative and destructive. Back of his words was his heroic personality.

BOOKS TO WHICH THE TEACHER IS REFERRED IN
PREPARING THIS LESSON.

Encyclopædia Britannica.

History of Christianity—Andrew Stephenson

Student's Life of Paul—Geo. Holley Gilbert

St. Paul, the Traveller and the Roman Citizen—
Wm. M. Ramsay

Work and Teachings of the Apostles—Chas. F.
Kent

The last two are particularly helpful, and these hints and explanations have been gleaned mainly from them.

LESSON MOTTO

“He is in earnest,—in most profound earnest.”

—Shakspeare.

QUESTIONS, LESSON XXVI

Please commit to memory Paul’s speech on Mars Hill (Acts 17: 22-31) The Revised Version substitutes the words “very religious” in verse 23 for the older translation which reads “too superstitious.”

Please learn it according to the Revised Version.

We may not know the exact words Paul used; but we may be very sure he did not begin by insulting his audience.

LESSON XXVII

IN CHAINS AT JERUSALEM

(Acts, chapters 21 to 26)

This very long lesson is an account of the turbulent and dramatic scenes which led to Paul being sent, a prisoner, to Rome. In time it covers two years. In Acts it runs through about five chapters. The most interesting way will be to treat it as if it were the exciting climax of a novel, to rush on with the reading as fast as we can in order to get the swing and thrill of the story, stopping only when a word of explanation will make the picture more vivid.

You remember that touching scene between Paul and Agabus, when Paul insisted on going to Jerusalem. The Book of Acts does not tell why he was so set on going, but scholars have decided it was in order that he might himself carry to the church at Jerusalem the collection which had been taken up for it in the Gentile churches. Agabus took Paul's girdle and bound his own hands and feet with it, prophesying that if Paul persisted in going to Jerusalem, harm would come of it. Let us read this again as the opening episode of the story.
(Acts 21:10-14)

Paul persisted in going to Jerusalem, and to

prove the falsity of the charge that he was hostile to Jewish practices he joined a company of men who had taken a vow which made it necessary to perform the ceremony of purification and to offer sacrifices in the temple every day for a week. All went well at first, but before the week was over a tumult was raging in and around the temple, Paul being the centre of the disturbance. You recall the temple railing, with its inscription forbidding Gentiles to pass beyond a certain point on pain of death. Paul's enemies saw him talk to a man from Ephesus, then cross the court, mount the steps, and pass beyond the line. They said that he had taken the stranger with him. At once all was confusion. Not wishing to kill him within the sacred place they laid violent hands upon him and dragged him outside. Then the great gates swung together. (Read Acts 21:27-31) The Chief Captain was one of the Roman military officers, not a Jewish temple official. (Read verse 32) “They” refers to the mob. (Read 33-36)

The tumult was so great that Paul had to be literally carried in the arms of the soldiers. At the top of a flight of steps, from which he could look down on the frenzied mob, Paul astonished the soldiers, who were at once his captors and his protectors, by asking in Greek if he might address the people. (Read Acts 21:37-40 and 22:1-22) It was a Jewish mob; and the root of the offense in their eyes was that he had carried his message to strangers, and now dared stand up and assert that

the God of the Hebrews had commanded him to do so. There was such confusion that the Chief Captain could make nothing at all of what was said. He ordered Paul to be taken into the barracks and examined under the lash, as the quickest way to find out the cause of the mob's hatred.

(Read Acts 22:25-29) This shows what a valuable thing Roman citizenship really was. The Captain was deeply impressed. (Read Acts 22:30 and Acts 23:1-5) It is upon this passage that some scholars base their theory that Paul had poor eyesight. Others maintain that Paul spoke ironically, meaning that he never would have guessed the High Priest's dignity from his behavior. Then Paul, who was clever as well as eloquent, saw that he could get the members of this strange priestly court to disputing among themselves, and proceeded to do so. (Read Acts 23:6-10)

Paul's great desire was to go to Rome. That night he had a vision which told him he should succeed. Perhaps this was the first time it had occurred to him that he might go to Rome as a prisoner if not as a free man. (Read Acts 23:11) But his enemies had no notion of allowing him to leave the town alive. (Read Acts 23:12-15)

Here a new character enters the story, just long enough to do Paul an important service and vanish, and incidentally to give us one of the rare glimpses we are allowed into Paul's private life. A nephew, Paul's sister's son, hears of the plotting. He is evidently a Jew in good and regular standing in the

temple; but family feeling gets the better of religious intolerance, and he comes to the castle where Paul is confined, to warn him. (Read Acts 23:16-22) The Chief Captain, whose name was Claudius Lysias, appears to have become very friendly to Paul, over night; and the prisoner certainly orders his guard about in lordly fashion.

(Read Acts 23:23-24) This was a large guard to set over one man against whom no specific accusation had been found; but the vow of the Jews had warned Lysias that he must be prepared for a sudden onslaught, even after the prisoner was well out of the city.

The guard gathered in the castle at night, the horses' hoofs ringing and echoing under the arches; the light of torches gleaming upon the men in armor. Lysias had written a letter to Felix the governor at Cæsarea explaining the case. This was handed to the commander of the guard, and the party set forth. (Read Acts 23:25-35)

(Read Acts 24:1) Tertullus was the lawyer retained by the Jews to argue the case before Felix. He began “with the subtlety of an oriental orator” by flattering the judge as a prelude to prejudicing him against the prisoner. (Read Acts 24:2-9) When Paul was called upon to speak in his turn, he used even more skill, alluding to the long experience of Felix as a ruler of Judea, and the knowledge this gave him of the lengths to which religious hatred might carry the Jews. (Read Acts 24:10-23) Felix

was mildly interested in the new religion, and more interested in Paul. There was not enough evidence to convict any prisoner, so he put off the decision, and while waiting for the arrival of Lysias heard Paul speak several times. He rather liked to hear him talk. At times he seemed quite moved by what Paul said. Possibly Felix might have set Paul at liberty had he not been married to a Jewess, and therefore anxious to keep on good terms with the Jews,—at least in his own household. Besides, he was not a very high type of official, and hoped for a bribe.

So matters went on for two years. Then a new governor was appointed. (Acts 24:27) Almost as soon as Festus arrived in Jerusalem the Jews told him their side of the story and asked him to order Paul to Jerusalem for trial. They had not given up their plan to kill him. Festus answered that it was not necessary, as he was soon going back to Cæsarea. Three days after his return to Cæsarea he called Paul before him. Paul denied having broken any law. Festus asked if he was willing to go to Jerusalem and be tried before him there. Paul suddenly saw his chance of getting to Rome, and claimed the right to be tried before Cæsar. (Read Acts 25:10-11) There was a moment of startled silence. (Read Acts 25:12)

But Rome was a long way off. It was necessary to await an opportunity to send the prisoner there in safety. A little later King Agrippa and his new Queen, Bernice, came to visit Festus at Cæsarea.

There was much feasting and ceremony; and after the entertainments had continued some days, Festus told Agrippa about Paul. Agrippa expressed a desire to hear him speak, so there was still another gathering in the Judgment Hall, very splendid this time because of visiting royalty. It was here that Paul gave that wonderful discourse recorded in the 26th chapter of Acts. The teacher would do well to read this as given in *Soul of the Bible*, pp. 414-417, adding verses 30-32)

So it was decided that Paul must be sent to Rome.

SUGGESTIONS

LESSON QUESTIONS. Instead of the usual lesson questions the class is asked to read in turn the selections indicated.

MAP. Use map of Jerusalem, showing relative position of Temple and the Tower Antonia. There is a plate in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* from which a tracing may be made.

LOCAL COLOR. Mathews' *Paul the Dauntless*, pp. 290-316, contains much that is good. It is particularly useful in describing the start at night under guard, when Paul is sent to Cæsarea. The trial scenes are also well done.

FELIX. Formerly a slave, who through a trick of fortune had been received into the imperial circle.

He married first a daughter of Antony and Cleopatra, then Drusilla. (Kent, 217)

LESSON MOTTO

"Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."
II Cor. 3: 17.

LESSON XXVIII

THE SHIPWRECK

(Acts 27:1-44; 28:1-16)

At last the day came upon which Paul was to leave for Rome. He went aboard the ship with Julius the Centurion, and with other prisoners. Two faithful friends accompanied him: (1) Luke, his doctor-companion, and a Macedonian named Aristarchus. Possibly they found it necessary to ship as Paul's slaves in order to go with him.

The next day they reached the harbor of Sidon, a busy port, echoing with the stroke of the shipwright's mallet, and all the hurly-burly of preparation for voyages by sea. Paul had visited the place twice before, in company with Barnabas. He told Julius that he had friends there, (2) and the Centurion, who had already come under his spell, allowed him to go ashore. He hurried off, with the eagerness which always came upon him at the prospect of meeting good friends.

The wind had stiffened before they set sail again. They were bound northwest for Myra on the coast of Lycia. (3) Cyprus lay right across their track. The ship with her one large mainsail could not sail to the south of the island in the teeth of such a wind, so

the Captain turned to the north in order to get into the lee of its shore. This brought Paul within sight of Salamis, which he had seen twelve years before on his first missionary journey. Between that day and this he had travelled thousands of miles, and been drenched with rain and snow, scorched by the sun, beaten and stoned, imprisoned and robbed, but never yet had he turned back from his great adventure. The ship continued northward, searching for the calmer waters of the Cilician and Pamphylian sea, and Paul, for the last time, looked upon the plain where he was born.

The ship turned westward, but had slow work, tacking to take advantage of light off-shore breezes. At last, however, it entered the strange great harbor of Myra, and as it came to anchor Julius the Centurion was on the lookout for a ship to take them on the next stage of their journey. His face lightened when he saw one whose cut and rig told him it was a grain ship carrying food from Egypt to feed the citizens of Rome. Prisoners and soldiers changed ships, and on climbing aboard found many passengers already ahead of them.

The wind held obstinately and it took many days to make Cnidus, farther west on the same coast, which was only one good day's sail from Myra. At that point they must leave the protecting shore; and if the sailing had been difficult before, it would be worse ahead. The captain turned south to get in the lee of Crete. There they found more favorable winds and soon fetched the harbor of Fair Haven.

(4) The Mediterranean was not safe for ships between November and the early days of March, and was always spoken of as “closed” during those months. There had been so much delay that Paul saw no hope of reaching Italy before the winter gales set in. (5) He had been born in a harbor town, and with his experience in travel felt that he knew the sea in all its moods. He spoke to the centurion, to the captain, and to the owner of the vessel, saying: (Read Acts 27:10-13).

Away to the right Mt. Ida, on the north coast, lifted her peak into the sky. It seemed that a few hours would see them safe in the harbor where they were to lie for the winter. But ugly weather was brewing over the mountain. Without warning the wind suddenly curved from the south, and circling, swept back from the north like an eagle striking its prey. The boat reeled as the gale, tugging at her sails, threatened to tear the main-mast from its roots. Clouds whirled; sheets of white spray lashed the deck. Sailors climbed the rigging to the great yard, and with a mighty effort managed to furl the sail. All efforts to bear up against the wind proved futile. At a command from the captain the men at the rudder sweeps let drive, and the ship tore across the water, the white-backed sea-hounds leaping and baying at her sides.

The toppling mainmast reeled dizzily, and under the wrench of the typhoon the ship shivered and groaned. Her timbers began to start, and a seaman going below could hear the sound that grips

a sailor's heart with a deadly chill,—the suck and splash of water in a leaking hull.

An island loomed over the bow to leeward. The ship staggered on, and at last, under the lee of this island of Clauda, the sailors rounded her to in smoother water, pulled alongside the ship's small boat which had bobbed like a cork at the stern; and laboriously, clinging to the ship's side, tugging and hauling, managed to wrap cables around the whole ship, under her hull and across her deck. The grinding and straining of timbers was less, but the vessel still leaked. Sailors swarmed aloft and fetched down her top gear, then, with storm-sail set, she swung out again in the path of the gale.

Night fell, but the wind still held; its hum in the rigging rising to a long wail. Waves hung over the ship like mountains, then, diving viciously under her bow, lifted her up and up till her decks sloped at a dizzy angle before they slung her down a ravine of water into the abyss. With the leaking hull increasing its menace the sailors were forced to throw out all sorts of things. Paul and Luke joined in the work. "We cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship," wrote Luke. By the third morning of the storm everything movable had been hurled overboard.

Day after dreary day passed, but never did the clouds break. Without sight of sun or star it was impossible to tell where they were drifting. There was an ominous heaviness now in the roll of the water-logged ship. Despair fell upon the sailors

and they knelt upon the deck praying to Castor and Pollux, the twin guardian gods of Roman mariners.

(6) Then Paul the prisoner assumed the *rôle* of leader and commander.(Read Acts 27: 21-26) The fourteenth night had fallen, with the gale still driving them. Suddenly there was a stir among the sailors, for the quick ear of one of them had detected a new sound, the boom of breakers on a rocky headland. It was the land for which they had prayed; but it might mean death upon the rocks before day dawned.

“Twenty fathoms—fifteen fathoms.” The sea was growing shallow, and white foam could now be seen through the darkness. Four anchors slid from the stern, their splash followed by moments of silent waiting. Would they hold? The ship slackened her pace, tugged at her cables, and stopped. They had chanced upon bottom where the anchors held; but waves broke and swept over the ship’s stern and it was evident that she must certainly break to pieces before long. The small boat was swung over the side and let down, and sailors prepared to follow, on the pretense of casting anchors from the bow,—an utterly useless thing to do under the circumstances. Their real aim was to get away from the doomed vessel.

Paul saw the manœuvre, and going to the Centurion said, “Unless these men stay in the ship you cannot be saved.” At a quick order from Julius, his soldiers strode to the ship’s side, drew their short swords, and slashed at the ropes. The little

boat shot out empty and was swallowed in the darkness.

Paul knew that the people aboard would need every ounce of their strength. No attempt could be made to leave the ship until full daylight, but at dawn he stood up and spoke words of common sense to the dejected mass of people, soldiers, sailors, traders, prisoners, and government officials, who crowded the deck to the number of 276 souls. (Read Acts 27: 33-34)

When there was light enough the ship must be run ashore. As every inch of distance from the beach added to the danger of landing, the ship must be relieved of all possible weight. Up to that time the cargo of wheat had been saved. Now sack after sack was brought up and cast into the water.

A creek with a sandy beach flowed into the bay where they found themselves. The captain decided to run for that, though it was a dangerous manœuvre, since right ahead were cliffs upon which the ship must surely be ground to splinters, if she failed to swing around in time.

Men waited at the bow and stern. At a word of command those at the bow hoisted the foresail with swift hands; those at the stern cut the anchor cables, and the passengers waited, breathless, to learn their fate. A sigh of relief went up as the ship swung away from the cliffs toward the creek, and moving on bedded her bow in the sand.

(7) As though the perils of the sea had not been enough, the Roman soldiers now gathered around

Julius, and pointing to Paul and the other prisoners said, “Let us kill them, lest they should swim out and escape.”

Under ordinary circumstances Julius might have been willing to do this, but Paul was a Roman citizen, and though a prisoner, was not like ordinary prisoners.

(Condensed from *Paul the Dauntless* by Basil Mathews, and used by permission of the author.)

(Read in class Acts 27:43-44 and (8) Acts 28:1-16) So Paul, through all these perils, came to Rome, where he was to live for two whole years.

SUGGESTIONS

THE SHIP’S COURSE. C. F. Kent, in *Work and Teachings of the Apostles*, p. 219, gives the usual route followed on such voyages.

ON THE ISLAND OF MELITA. In G. H. Gilbert’s *Student’s Life of Paul*, p. 100, will be found an explanation of the “miracle” of the viper’s bite. It was cold, the fire warmed the creature and roused it from its torpor sufficiently to enable it to strike, but not to send the venom through its fangs.

THE SHIPWRECK. The narrative form of the story of Paul’s experiences on the way to Rome given in this lesson may help teachers to read the Bible passage with more understanding. No account given in other words can equal the life-like and thrilling story of the voy-

age (Acts. 27; 28:1-16) as written in our Bible by one who participated in it. Scholars say it is the most complete and best written nautical narrative that has come down to us from antiquity, and that it tells us more about ancient navigation than does any other source of information on that subject.

MELITA. This is the island of Malta, as the pupil who draws question 8 will discover.

POINTS TO BE EMPHASIZED. Paul's serenity and practical good sense.

That in an emergency he became the real commander of the ship. (Send the children on a hunt for other instances, ancient or modern, in which brains and character have come to the front in a crisis.)

LESSON MOTTO

"He that would learn to pray, let him go to sea."

QUESTIONS, LESSON XXVIII

1.

Before coming to class read Acts 27, and the first 14 verses of Acts 28. In class name two friends who were with Paul on this journey. If you keep your wits about you, and "look hard" you will find the answer in Acts 27:2.

2.

Before coming to class read Acts 27, and the first 14 verses of Acts 28. In class tell us whether Julius seemed to regard Paul as a mere prisoner; and recall certain other

instances in which Paul's fine spirit won the confidence of his jailers.

3.

Before coming to class read Acts 27, and the first 14 verses of Acts 28. In class show us upon the map the route the ship took from Cæsarea as far as Myra; and tell us what Paul did there.

4.

Before coming to class read Acts 27, and the first 14 verses of Acts 28. In class tell us what you can find out about the difficulty of sailing upon the Mediterranean in winter in those days. Were the boats big or little? Was the mariner's compass in common use? And anything else in regard to ancient navigation that you can discover.

5.

Before coming to class read Acts 27, and the first 14 verses of Acts 28. In class tell us whether you think Paul was justified in giving advice about sailing the ship, and about when and how the journey should be made? Did his experience warrant it? Being Paul, could he have refrained from giving advice?

6.

Before coming to class read Acts 27, and the first 14 verses of Acts 28. Tell us who proved to be the real captain of that ill-fated craft and why.

7.

Before coming to class read Acts 27, and the first 14 verses of Acts 28. In class tell us why the soldiers demanded that the prisoners be put to death; and whether it seemed as inhuman a thing to do then as it would now.

8.

Before coming to class read Acts 27, and the first 14 verses of Acts 28. In class tell us how Paul was treated on the island of Melita. What is the island called today?

LESSON XXIX

A PRISONER IN HIS HIRED HOUSE

(Acts 28:17-31)

After Paul reached Rome he did not, as the saying is, "let the grass grow under his feet." Before he had been there three days, he called the leading Jews together and explained his situation to them, being careful to keep their good will by saying, "Not that I had aught to accuse my nation of." (Read Acts 28:17-20) The next two verses give the answer they made to him. (Read verses 21, 22) What Paul did for them and the effect of his teaching is then told. (Read verses 23, 24) In this way Paul began his Roman ministry.

There in his hired house he became the pastor of a wide parish,—wider than he dreamed, for his words radiated from that centre to parts of the earth then undiscovered. Even in his day his parish was wide. He preached to the people who came to Rome, who carried his message among their friends to the uttermost ends of the Roman world; and in addition to the spoken words, he sent letters of comfort and admonition to the many Christian churches he knew and loved.

Now read Acts 28: 30-31, the last words in the Book of Acts. Very little is known about the

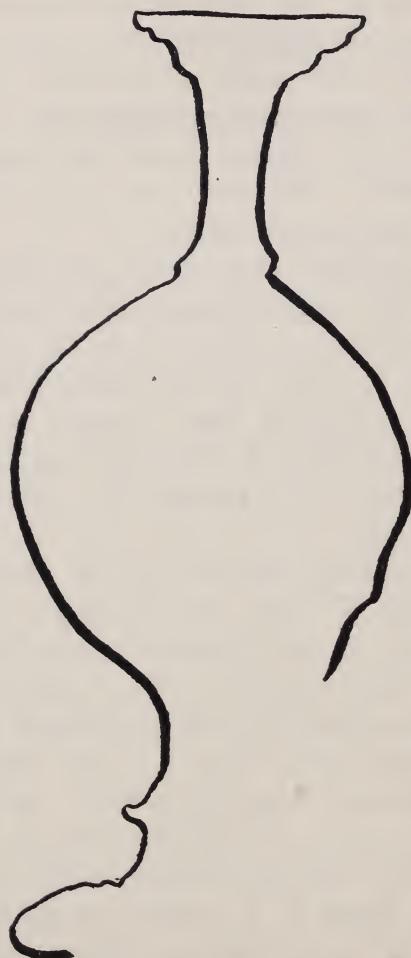
remainder of Paul's life, though there are many inferences and conjectures.

Can we not be grateful that the account leaves him there, free in spirit, though bound with a chain? Very likely he reached more souls of his own and succeeding generations from that one spot than if he had been at liberty to wander over the earth until the day of his death. We know that he is still reaching and influencing minds today.

Just as a matter of telling a story truly and effectively, this Book of Acts, which leaves Paul vigorous and working, is truer in a large way, than if it followed him step by step to the martyrdom which tradition says overtook him. Doing that would have filled its last pages with harrowing details which would merely have blurred the outline now so clear and strong.

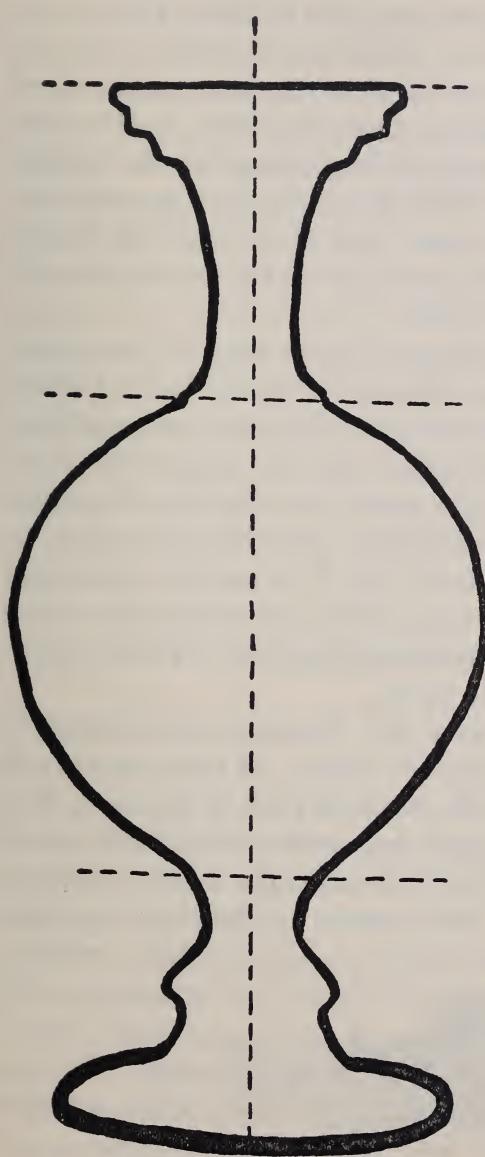
This mistake of blurring outlines in an effort to make them clearer is one we all have to guard against, whether we are drawing a picture, or telling a story, or following out a line of reasoning. Good artists are always preaching against it to their pupils; and how not to do it is the most valuable lesson one learns in an art school. It is called "keeping the sense of relative values." Great writers practise it; and while great thinkers may not talk so much about it, it is their ability to stick to the main point of an argument, without permitting themselves to be led away on side issues, which furnishes the final proof of their superior minds.

Let us take an example from the art school. A pupil is asked to draw a vase. He begins, usually at the upper left hand corner of his paper, and follows down the outline of one side.



It goes pretty well, and he is quite pleased with himself. Then he begins to do the same for the other side. That too starts off finely; but soon, in spite of all he can do, his pencil is telling the most atrocious lies about that vase. The characteristic thing about such a vase is that the two sides are exactly alike; his are very different, which is not surprising, since it would require years of training for the hand, and a wonderfully accurate eye, to

draw it correctly in that casual manner. And, astonishing as it may seem, the outline in itself is of only minor importance. The necessary thing is to



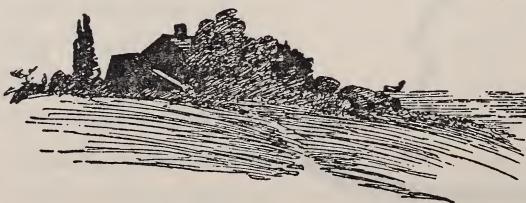
get a correct picture of the mass enclosed within the outline. That will be a picture of the vase, while the outline is only the edge of the vase. If the mass is pictured correctly, the outline will take care of itself. A drawing teacher will tell you that the best way, especially for a beginner, is to determine upon the exact centre of the vase, and to draw a straight line to represent that. It need not be a very black and visible line,—all we need is enough to serve as guide. Next,

by looking hard at the vase, and thinking harder, we determine the relative proportions of the neck and the base and the bowl; and perhaps we make other slight marks to indicate these divisions,—all before we are ready to make a beginning on the actual drawing. Then, a little at a time, now on one side and now on the other, we work at the outline, always keeping in mind the relation of the whole vase to that middle straight line.

A wise and skilful artist once said to his pupil: “Never look at what you paint; always look at something else.” At the time she thought he was talking the most arrant nonsense, but the longer she lives the more thankful she grows for that bit of advice. Of course, it is necessary to see what you paint, or you cannot reproduce it; but it is equally necessary to keep on looking consistently and constantly at the thing as a whole, not alone at the tiny bit upon which you happen to be at work.

Again, suppose you are drawing a landscape in which there is a group of trees. It is impossible to draw in detail one thousandth part of the leaves on those trees, and if you try, your picture will be all out of drawing. Yet you can make a fairly correct representation of the scene by keeping in mind

the relative
masses of
light sky,
dark foliage,
and grayish
fields.



In other words, whatever we do, whether it be painting a picture or telling a story or working out a problem in mathematics, it is our duty to find the very centre and kernel of truth—the heart of the matter—and to present that, alive and glowing.

This is what Luke did in presenting his picture of Paul. He told us things about him that are of infinitely more importance than the manner of his death. He drew a picture of Paul's character. He made us understand that Paul had a rich, vigorous nature; that he could work hard, and enjoy much, and that just as this character of his won his jailers and made them his friends, his earnestness and courage were able to bend adverse circumstances to his will and make them work for the glory of God.

SUGGESTIONS

THE LITTLE DIAGRAMS. It is effective to make the drawings "on the spot." Even if the teacher is not an adept at that sort of thing, a little practice beforehand will enable one to draw as badly as these require. Have the pupils draw also. They will not get very far, for this part of the lesson must be hurried through; but the mere fact of having a pencil in the hand will bring it home to them.

PHOTOGRAPHS. One or two pictures, showing big convincing masses, and an equal number in which detail is portrayed to the detriment of the composition should also be exhibited. Millet's

“Sheepfold” is a good example of the former, and Knaus’s “Christening,” of the later kind. The first is a poem; the second, only a catalogue. Both are to be found among the inexpensive Perry prints.

PAUL’S CHARACTER. The greater part of the lesson should be devoted to the lists which the children bring to class in answer to the lesson question. Between twenty and thirty different qualities will probably be enumerated. Choose the six most often mentioned, and consider and discuss what part they played in Paul’s conduct on various occasions. As:

On the road to Damascus.

The long missionary journeys.

Intercourse with his jailers.

In the face of mobs.

Before kings.

During the shipwreck.

At Rome.

Draw inferences, and make modern applications.

LESSON MOTTOES

“It is our inside climate which counts most; even in August.” —Woods Hutchinson.

“Stone walls do not a prison make
Nor iron bars a cage.
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an heritage.
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,

Angels alone, that soar above
Enjoy such liberty."

—Lovelace.

QUESTION, LESSON XXIX

Each pupil has the same direction. It is this:

Let us invent a sort of game for next Sunday.

Write out and bring with you a list of six or eight qualities that you think Paul possessed. For instance, the gift of public speaking, of energy, and so on.

Out of all these lists we will make up one containing the qualities named by most of the class.

Then we will try to imagine what would have happened to Paul at certain important moments in his life if he had lacked any one of them.

LESSON XXX

PAUL'S IDEA OF THE RESURRECTION (Easter lesson)

Paul's idea of the resurrection was colored by his time and his Jewish birth, but it was also very modern.

The idea of immortality has been cherished, secretly or openly, by almost every human being. With the Jews it had passed through two phases before Jesus was born. The early Hebrews thought that God took account of nations, but did not concern himself very much with individuals. Theirs was the favored nation. God judged and punished it for its sins. In time a perfect kingdom would result from such judgments, and that perfect kingdom was to endure forever.

When the Jews ceased to exist as a nation, it was manifest that this idea had been wrong. The members of the nation lived on as individuals in captivity, and the idea was modified to fit changed conditions. Some of them believed that God was to judge each person. The wicked were to be condemned to everlasting shame, and out of the good people a new and wonderful kingdom was to be made, which was to endure and to rule the earth. Since the only people

who could hope to please God were those who lived according to Jewish law, it would be a Jewish kingdom. So practically the old result was arrived at by the new reasoning. But back of both gleams the larger idea that God's purpose is good, and that good is indestructible.

Then Jesus began his teaching. His followers believed him to be the Messiah, who, according to the expectation of devout Jews, was to come to judge the world and to rule the purified kingdom. They misunderstood what he said about the kingdom of God not being a kingdom of this world, and expected to see him, a descendant of David, sitting upon an earthly throne.

Soon he was put to death. But almost instantly it was asserted that he could not really have died; for he had been seen by some of his disciples, and had talked with them and comforted them. So they took courage again. If he could thus return from the dead, he must indeed be the Messiah; and in his own good time, which would certainly come before long, he would descend from heaven to judge and to rule the world.

Paul spent his life trying to make the people see that the Christian fellowship was not bounded by race or nation, but was as wide as the world itself; but he clearly shared the belief in a speedy second coming of Christ, and he pictured it vividly, as he was apt to picture things when he wrote about them.

He was sane and wise, however, and some of his fellow-Christians were not. The early church was

made up of all sorts of people, some of them very foolish, and all very full of human nature. We know that it is hard sometimes for human nature to distinguish between Right and Desire. In such a body of people, believing in a speedy second coming of Christ, heralded by a day of wrath, with earthquakes and destruction on every side, the less well-balanced and all of the more vindictive might feel, in addition to zeal for their faith, indignation for the wrongs they and their friends had suffered in the world so soon to come to an end. It would be easy for such a state of mind to deteriorate into a very dreadful kind of fanaticism. Men would forget to perform the acts of courtesy which in ordinary times self-interest, if no higher motive, imposed upon them. They would neglect to provide for the children and helpless people dependent upon them. “O well,” they might say, “What does it matter? The world is coming to an end. But before it does, I mean to get even with So and So.” Or, “I am not going to waste precious hours toiling to get money and food we may never need to use. We are of the elect. It is God’s business to look out for us.”

Against all this Paul stood firm as a rock. He was, says a writer on the early church, “a great steadyng influence.” He pointed out that nobody, not Jesus himself, knew the hour of the second coming; and that it behooved pious people, while waiting for it, to live in the world as they found it,

and to strive, with every means at their command, to make it the kind of world Jesus would be glad to find when he arrived.

So Paul preached sobriety and kindness and brotherly love, and the doing of deeds which build up character and render men and women more like Christ. Upon this he insisted through many pages of his writings.

Hebrew writers love imagery. Paul's mind and training were those of an educated Hebrew; so he wrote about these things in the Hebrew manner. Indeed, it is impossible to write upon such subjects without using metaphor. Whether Paul believed that the actual body of Christ which had died upon the cross and had been buried, had indeed risen from the grave and was coming soon to sit in the seat of judgment, is a matter about which everybody is entitled to his own opinion. Those who know most about the early Christian church think that at first it was the resurrection of the Spirit of Jesus that was taught, and that the later belief in the resurrection of an actual physical body, not only in the case of Jesus but of every person who dies, was an honest blundering attempt to explain this earlier belief and the phenomena cited to prove it.

After all, the exact shade of Paul's opinion on this point is a secondary matter. What we are sure of is that he used images and metaphors of Christ's bodily death when he wished to impress upon his followers a truth which deals with spiritual matters.

In Romans 6:4, for example, he says that those who become followers of Christ die with him; are buried with him; and rise with him to walk in newness of life. They die to their old sinful life as Christ's physical body died; they are buried in baptism as he was buried in the tomb; and like him they take on new life. And he follows this with many explanations.

One of the most beautiful of his explanations, certainly one of the easiest for us to understand, is that in which he uses the simile of a grain of wheat, which must fall into the ground and apparently be destroyed before it can fulfil its destiny of renewed and more glorious life. (I Cor. 15:36-38)

It is here that he is so very modern; for he tells us precisely the same truth that students in many branches of science tell us in other words. You have learned it all in school,—how the mysterious power that is in the soil goes into the life of the tree, which in time falls to the ground. Then it may be used for fire wood. As it burns, the log which was once a living tree seems to crumble into nothingness before our eyes; yet we know that the heat of the flame is another very potent form of energy, that its substance does not perish, it only changes its form, and so on, from wonder to wonder.

Paul did another very “modern” thing when he wrote about death as being a “sleep,” (I Thess. 4:13-14) something natural and beneficent, not to be regarded with fear, or with too much sorrow. That

was no new discovery of Paul's, but we comfort ourselves with the same thoughts whenever we stand beside a new-made grave.

As we have already learned, Paul was a man of vision, and also of visions. The two are very different, for one means clear common sense, the other exalted moments of inspiration, comparable only to the glory of the sun as it bursts through heavy clouds. In both these moods he wrote about the resurrection. The practical clean-cut view you may find in Col. 3:1-3 where he bids the followers of Jesus live as Jesus would have them live.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." It is an admonition full of imagery, but full also of everyday common sense.

For the revelation of what this belief in immortality really means to the human race we have the wonderful fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians—a trumpet-peal of triumph.

"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. . . . O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

There have been many good people in the world to whom the full splendor of this vision has been denied—literal-minded folk, insisting on a resurrection of the body, bone for bone, and demanding to know just

how it was going to be managed, in the grave and afterward. Some have seemed to revel in unpleasant details; some, perceiving the practical difficulties of such a belief, have repudiated the whole idea of any kind of life after death. Others have refused to consider immortality except of the negative sort suggested in Maeterlinck's *Bluebird*, where, you remember, the dead awake and live only so long as people think about them, returning to a land of sleeping gray shadows the moment they are forgotten.

Others believe in the immortality of good deeds, as set forth by George Eliot:

“O may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude; in scorn
For miserable aims that end in self;
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.”

Then there are others who believe with all the strength of their hearts that the spirit survives the body, and that the best in our friends lives on after death, happy and still working God's will.

John 14: 2 makes Jesus say that in his father's house are “many mansions.” There may be room in them for infinitely more phases of life than we recognize; and perhaps the truest words Paul ever wrote were those in the eighth chapter of Romans when he recorded his own belief “that the sufferings

of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed." (v. 18)

So, there is a wide latitude of thought upon the subject. Probably our own personal understanding of what is meant by immortality may change in the course of our lifetime, just as the Jewish notion of it altered through the centuries, growing ever more spiritual, from that crude belief in a sort of block-immortality of a small tribe here on earth, to the wonderful idea of Jesus, that every devout soul is a child of God, and may be "one" with God in carrying on the divine purposes.

We celebrate Easter in our church for several reasons. First, because we believe so sincerely that spirit triumphs over accidents of physical life and death. Second, because in this spring season when every plant and shrub is giving its testimony to renewed life, it seems fitting to make public acknowledgment of the yearly miracle; and third, because the idea of resurrection put new heart into the disciples and made it possible to continue the work and teachings of Jesus. In that sense Easter is the true birthday of the Christian Church.

SUGGESTIONS

EMPHASIZE Paul's insistence that it is the business of Christians to live amiably and sanely in this world; making the best of circumstances, and doing everything in their power to transform it into a heaven upon earth.

PICTURES. Show some of the early Christian symbols and explain their significance, such as: Bread, Light, Door, Good Shepherd, Resurrection, Life, the Way, the Vine (these seven typify the character of Jesus)—Fish, Aura, Instruments of the Passion.

CHRYSALIS AND BUTTERFLY. This often-used example of a changed form of life is treated in effective fashion in Mrs. Marie Conway Oemler's novel *Slippy McGee*, p. 111. Just because it is very colloquial and not at all conventional in form, it may make an impression.

LESSON MOTTOES

“There is no death. What seems so is transition.

This life of mortal breath

Is but the suburb of the life elysian

Whose portal we call death.”

—Longfellow.

“Man makes a death which Nature never made.”

—Young's “Night Thoughts”

QUESTION, LESSON XXX

Come prepared on Easter (next) Sunday to tell us why we celebrate Easter day as a great church festival. Those of the class who studied Miss Buck's *Story of Jesus* last year will remember that she gave three reasons. Which of these appeals to you most?

LESSON XXXI

PAUL'S CHARACTER

The writings of Paul which have come down to us are all in the form of letters, addressed either to a group of people, like a church, or to a single individual. Letters are perhaps the most spontaneous kind of writing. While not so perfect in form as a poem, or so polished as an essay, a letter reveals its writer's character through its very informality.

We think of Paul's letters principally as written sermons, full of good advice and of strange doctrinal points; (1) but in reality they are most human documents, stuffed full of hints, not only about himself but about his friends as well. We found that, when his letter to Philemon opened up secret after secret as we studied it. The others do the same. He is constantly breaking into his argument with a personal note. (2) We learn of his desire to go to Spain; (3) although most of his letters are written by his secretary or his helper, he often takes the pen into his own hand and sends a personal message. I Cor. 16:21 and Gal. 6:11. (4) He shows his optimism by asking Philemon to prepare a lodging for him in order that it may be ready when he is released

from prison. Time and again these letters yield interesting hints to students of Paul and his time.

Even before Paul died, his letters had become so famous that people forged his name to statements and predictions, and circulated them among the churches. One of these false letters announced the date of the second coming of Christ. It is to this that reference is supposed to be made in II Thess. 2: 1-3 when the church is warned not to believe that any such communication comes from Paul.

How many letters he wrote, nobody knows; for some may have been lost. It is not even certainly known how many or what he wrote while in Rome, though Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon are commonly referred to as the prison epistles and assigned to this period. Some modern scholars think, however, that these were written from an earlier imprisonment in Ephesus. Romans, Galatians, and the two Corinthians are called the chief epistles, because they most fully set forth his doctrines. The two epistles to the Thessalonians are supposed to have been written before the others. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* tells us that they are probably “the oldest Christian documents.”

While it is impossible to be sure of the exact order in which they were written, it is thought to have been as follows:—I & II Thessalonians, I & II Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philippians. As we have already learned, Hebrews is no longer believed to be an Epistle of Paul. Most New Testament schol-

ars agree that I & II Timothy and Titus, long thought to have been Paul's, were not written by him. It is reasonably certain he wrote the larger and more important books, named above, which constitute more than half of the group commonly known as the Epistles of Paul.

There is a homely proverb to the effect that the proof of the pudding is in the eating: and we are told that nine-tenths of the sermons preached today are from texts to be found in Acts or the Epistles of Paul. Acts alone, or the epistles alone, would be fragmentary and misleading in giving us our mental picture of the man who, next to Jesus, has had the greatest influence over the minds and hearts of Christians. Taken together they supplement each other, bridge gaps, explain puzzling statements, and reveal to us the great, ardent, kindly spirit who maintained that the good news of man's relation to God as preached by Jesus should be free to Jew and Gentile alike.

We all like stories, for they make pictures and images in our minds. As we have said many times this winter, the men of Bible times and lands were much given to the use of stories in their teaching.

The vivid poetic imagination of Jesus seized upon and dramatized the humblest event, giving us the wonderful series of parables and pictures of daily life to be found in the Gospels. He talked. He did not write. "His teaching," says F. G. Peabody, "was for the occasion, the person, and the moment.

The mind of the Master seemed fixed on the single soul and the immediate need, yet disclosed the working of universal law.” Perhaps it was this personal man-to-man quality, which so vitalized and glorified his words.

Paul’s message was more general. Most of his letters were addressed to a small intimate group. But they were written, not spoken, and being sent to churches at a distance had to be expressed in more general terms than if he had been present. In other words, he wrote sermons instead of telling stories, as Jesus did,—stories that are veritable poems in their brevity and insight and lofty thought.

The metaphors used by Jesus reveal a tender love of nature, a keen appreciation of beauty, and an intimate knowledge of country life.

Paul’s figures of speech are less poetical and less picturesque, and show greater familiarity with the world of business. He was a city man, who re-interpreted the words of Jesus into a language that ordinary matter-of-fact city-folk could understand. (5) When he said “the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6: 23) their attention was arrested. They stopped to think, perhaps to argue. His “building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,” (II Cor. 5: 1) described to them a very comfortable and durable habitation.

A gold ring is chiefly valuable for the gold it contains, but we can make better use of it and wear it longer because of the alloy which has been worked into the precious metal to stiffen it. Paul’s way of

giving the teachings and the gospel of Jesus may have had some alloy in it, but he was a tremendously useful man who carried the knowledge of Jesus to many who else would not have known him.

Paul had much to say about soldiers, about athletics, and about courts of law; and small wonder, considering the frequent experience he had of them! It has been pointed out that his illustrations and figures of speech come under four general heads—(6) Roman soldiers; (7) ancient agriculture; Greek games; and classical architecture. Paul was evidently impressed by the beauty and solidity of the wonderful Greek and Roman buildings he saw while upon his travels. He repeatedly used figures of speech which showed his interest in them.

It may be profitable to compare one of these with the more familiar parable in which Jesus makes use of the idea of buildings. In I Cor. 3: 10-17, Paul tells of the wise master-builder, who lays foundations that others may build upon. Though there is a warning note, indeed almost a threat in what he says, we feel even more a sense of orderly construction, of square lines and truly laid walls, than of anything personal or dramatic. (8) But when Jesus talks about two houses, one built upon the sand and the other upon a rock, we feel the assault of the tempest, the alternating hope and fear of the owners of the dwellings, and the tragedy that overcame one of them when his house collapsed. (Matt. 7: 24-27) In the same way, when Jesus talks about building a tower, and calculating the cost before the

work is begun (Luke 14: 28-30) it is not because of possible money-difficulties, or dangers of construction, but to avoid the moral tragedy of failure to carry a plan to completion.

Paul's writings seem to us singularly uneven; but that is scarcely to be wondered at, when we recollect that they were letters written almost two thousand years ago and addressed to a people of an alien race and an entirely different mode of life. The consciences and hearts of these people, however, were very like our own, and Paul's heart and conscience were so big and true and commanding that they overleap these wide barriers of time and environment. As for his language at its best it is very fine, though rarely touched by the poetic fire of the shorter simpler words of Jesus. It has the eloquence of extreme earnestness; and his admonitions and sturdy example reach us across the centuries fresh and strong,—almost as if we heard his personal voice.

Reading his words is like taking a good bracing tonic.

SUGGESTIONS

BEGIN THE LESSON WITH A QUESTION. Ask what form of writing the members of the class prefer. “The story” will probably be the unanimous answer. It will be difficult to get even a majority in a vote for second choice; but all will agree that they like to receive letters, and that letters have a

charm of their own because they reveal character, and thus enable us to make up our own story about their writers. This will lead up to the introductory and historical part of the lesson; then return to the story idea, and contrast the methods of Jesus and Paul.

PAUL'S PARABLES AND METAPHORS. They show comparatively little of the dramatic quality, even when they deal with running races, or fighting. He makes his appeal through reason rather than by means of dramatic pictures.

Contrast Romans 6: 5 and II Cor. 9: 6-10 with Matt. 13:3-9; II Cor. 4:6 with Matt. 5:15; I Cor. 3:10-17 with Matt. 7:24-27; Gal. 5:9 with Matt. 13:33; I Cor. 16:9 with Matt. 7:7-8.

On the other hand Paul made use of a whole division of picturesque metaphor scarcely touched by Jesus, notably his striking allusions to soldiers' armor, to athletics and exercise.

POINTS TO BE BROUGHT OUT. The direct appeal his letters make, in spite of distance and translation.

The beauty of his language at its best.

The tonic quality of his admonitions.

That his manner of teaching and the manner used by Jesus were equally needed in the world.

DRAMATIC QUALITY IN PARABLES FROM THE GOSPELS.

Sowing seed (Mat.. 13:3-9 and 24-30)

Lost coin (Luke 15:8-10)

Widow's mites. (Mark 12: 41-44 and Luke 21: 1-4) (Jesus had the poetic vision to see a parable as it was acted before him.)

New wine in old wine-skins. (Matt. 9: 17)

Light *not* under a bushel. (Matt. 5: 15)

The ninety-and-nine. (Matt. 18: 12-14)

The ambitious guest. (Luke 14: 7-11)

House upon the rock. (Matt. 7: 24-27)

Prodigal son. (Luke 15: 11-32)

LESSON MOTTOES

“A light to guide to check the erring, and reprove.” —Wordsworth.

“Records that defy the tooth of time.”

—Young, “The Statesman’s Creed.”

QUESTIONS, LESSON XXXI

1.

Do you think Paul’s epistles are like other letters? State two ways in which, while telling about other things, he unconsciously reveals his own character.

2.

In the fifteenth chapter of Romans Paul refers to a cherished plan of his to make a long journey. See if you can find the reference.

3.

In I Corinthians 16 and in Galatians 6 there are verses which give hints as to the manner in which these letters were actually written. See if you can find them.

4.

Do you remember in the letter to Philemon Paul's request to have some one prepare a lodging for him? Please look it up.

5.

See if you can find, in the sixth chapter of Romans, an assertion that would be apt to make a business man who heard it for the first time stop and think.

6.

See if you can find some of Paul's characteristic figures of speech about soldiers and armor. Ephesians, sixth chapter, will be a good place in which to look.

7.

See if you can find some of Paul's characteristic allusions to athletics. The ninth chapter of First Corinthians, and the third chapter of Philippians may yield something.

8.

Find and read us the parable in Matthew 7 about the house built upon the sand.

LESSON XXXII

“WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE TRUE”

At the end of the last lesson we were talking about the beauty of Paul's language at its best, and about his sturdy good advice. We came to the conclusion that reading his letters was like taking a good bracing tonic.

One of the best pieces of advice he ever gave is to be found in his letter to the Philippians. “Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” (4:8-9)

Do you realize why he said this? It was not in order that his followers might be made happy by forgetting unpleasant facts, or because he wished them to remain ignorant of evil. It was because Paul recognized the immense power of thought.

He realized that religion is a matter of the mind as well as of the heart; and that conscience and intellect and will-power all have a lot to do in helping us to lead a Christian life. We are born with the power to think; a power to sort out our sensations and experiences and decide which are

good and which are bad, for us and for the world. Marcus Aurelius wrote, "Our life is what our thoughts make it," and the poet Byron called the power of thought "the magic of the mind." How magical it is we realize, faintly, when we stop to reflect that all the wonders of invention; every bit of art,—the beautiful pictures and sculpture; all the marvels civilization has brought us in the way of convenience and speed, which we now take quite for granted; the tasks electricity has been made to do for us; the way in which we can skim over the surface of the earth and mount up beyond the clouds "with wings, as eagles," all have come about as the result of thought. They had to be ardently desired,—that was the emotional part,—but they had also to be accurately pictured in somebody's mind and planned and persistently worked for, before they could take concrete form and become available for use. "The brain is a little organ . . . one can carry it in one's hat. Yet think what Shakspeare did with it!"

Since we have been given this power of thought it is our duty to use it,—seven days in the week, including Sunday. "When we go to church, we should not check our brains, as a man checks his coat or his umbrella." It is our business and our privilege to think. You remember that when Jesus told us about the great commandment he reminded us that we were to worship the Lord not merely with all our hearts and our souls, but with all our minds.

It is worshiping “with the mind” when we try to bring ourselves and our surroundings into accord with what we honestly believe God wants them to be. The wonderful inventions we were considering a moment ago are proof positive that the human mind can make over the world. It is slow work; not to be accomplished in a day, or likely to show much progress even in a century.

Improvement in the world of morals is as slow as in the world of material things. But little by little ideas and ideals do change, until evils that were regarded as something to be patiently endured are recognized as evils which may be cured; and then, if minds only work hard enough on the problem, they are cured.

It is by the power of thought then, that we actually make the world in which we have to spend our days. “If only young men and young women could realize this; could know of a scientific truth that during the formative years of their life, God, through their minds, is making the world in which they are to live for the next fifty years!” wrote the minister who preached against “checking our brains” when we go to church.

Do you not think this was what St. Paul meant by his “whatsoever?” Let us repeat the passage again.

But that was only one of Paul’s searching and excellent ideas. In the “game” with which we propose to close the lesson we are going in pursuit of others. Let us see what passages the class has

chosen as best expressing his ideas upon perseverance, law, and courage, and neighborliness.

SUGGESTIONS

ANOTHER COMPETITION. In order to make searching the scriptures a little more exciting, the class may be divided into “teams” in the manner outlined in the lesson questions, with the object of hunting through Paul’s letters for what they consider the best passages about perseverance, law, courage, and neighborliness.

Let the class vote the week before upon whether points are to be given for (1) having read the assignment. (2) The number of interesting passages found. (3) Memorizing the required passage; and the total number of points to be counted.

GETTING THE PARENTS TO HELP. It is suggested, in view of the fact that the assignment will look large, that the teacher write to the parents asking if they will read these assignments with the members of the class. Home assistance would have to be taken into account in determining the number of points due the pupil. The number of points awarded might well be increased, instead of diminished, for such help!

LESSON MOTTOES

“But words are things; and a small drop of ink
Falling like dew upon a thought, produces
That which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think.”

—Byron

“Whate'er thou lovest, man,
That too become thou must;
God, if thou lovest God;
Dust, if thou lovest dust.”

—Johann Scheffler

QUESTIONS, LESSON XXXII

Please commit to memory Philippians 4: 8-9.

In addition we will have another competition.

Let the class divide into two “teams” drawing lots to determine their membership. The object of the competition is to find the best passage in Paul’s letters about these four subjects, perseverance, law, courage, and neighborliness.

Each member of the team will be responsible for only one subject. Points are to be given (1) for having read the assignment. (2) For the number of interesting passages found. (3) For having correctly memorized Phil. 4: 8-9.

The class may vote today the total number of points in the game and upon how many each of the above, numbered one, two, and three, is to stand for.

In any disputed point the teacher will serve as referee.

PART V

SOME CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES

LESSON XXXIII

“USE HOSPITALITY ONE TO ANOTHER”

(1) We hear much about the “laws of hospitality”—a code of honor that no true man or woman will break.

The dictionary definition of hospitality is “to be kind and cordial toward strangers or guests.” In the old Hebrew days the ancestors of Peter and Paul made much of this law; which indeed has been held in high esteem, not only in Bible lands, but in all parts of the world, at all ages, as one of the gracious customs which make life beautiful.

(2) In the old tent life of the desert an elaborate ceremony was built up around this idea of being kind to strangers and guests. The host need not know who they were, or what their errand might be. If a man appeared out of the heat and glare of the sands, weary, with parched throat and dusty body, it was the host’s business to offer him shelter and food and water for bathing, if he had them, without asking questions. Genesis 18: 2-8 gives a vivid picture of such hospitality. In that case Abraham was well rewarded for his kindness. His visitors were not human beings, but angels, who brought the blessing he most desired. (3) It is this incident that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, whoever he may be, mentions (13: 2) when he writes: “Be not

forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

(4) On their side, the guests to whom such generous treatment was accorded, were bound by honor to a certain line of conduct. If the guest knew he came upon an errand that his host would disapprove, or if he were an enemy, he must tell him so frankly at once. He must not accept a man's kindness and then do him an injury.

You remember that in the story of Rebecca at the well, told in the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis, the servant who was sent down into Mesopotamia to find a wife for his master's son would not accept the hospitality of Rebecca's brother before he had stated his errand. He was neither an enemy nor a thief. His intentions were most friendly; but he came to take away something his host prized, and his host must understand that before a morsel of the proffered feast passed his lips.

The same idea prevailed in Europe during the Middle Ages. "I have eaten his salt" was sufficient answer in that turbulent time to any proposition to do a host injury. And once a man had become a guest, even though he might previously have been an enemy, he was to be defended to the last extremity even to the sacrifice of members of the host's own family.

To prove how deep-seated is this idea of the sacredness of hospitality and that it is something even the most primitive savages feel, we can turn our eyes to the centre of what used to be known as

darkest Africa, and is "dark" even yet. Here, travelers tell us, laws of hospitality prevail among cannibal tribes. (See "Suggestions.")

(5) In the early church when part of the Christian code was to share everything in common, and later, during the seasons of persecution, when whole families were in danger of being driven from their homes, and might find themselves absolutely dependent upon the help of their fellow-Christians in a strange town, hospitality loomed large among the virtues, not only to those in need but to those who had oversight in the churches. "Be kindly affectioned one to another . . . distributing to the necessity of the saints; given to hospitality," Paul wrote to the Romans. (12:10-13) In I Timothy there is this good advice about the kind of men to choose for bishops: "A bishop then must be blameless . . . vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality." (I Tim. 3:2) And the substance of this is repeated in Titus (1:7-8) in saying that a bishop ought to be "a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate." So also in I Peter (4:9), Christians are urged to "use hospitality one to another without grudging."

(6) If ever a man deserved hospitality it was Paul, and we know that he enjoyed it to its fullest extent. You remember Aquila and Priscilla, the couple driven from Rome by Claudius; how they heard Paul preach in the synagogue at Corinth, and were so impressed by him that they begged him to visit them in their own house, which afterward became a second

home to him. Then there was Lydia, the seller of purple at Philippi, and the jailer who made Paul his guest after the earthquake in the same town.

(7) What Jesus said about hospitality is given in Luke 14: 13-14. "When thou makest a feast call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee." We have no reason to believe that he objected to people enjoying their own friends, or having a good time with them. He certainly often ate with his own chosen band of followers and rejoiced in their company; and we read in John that he blessed a marriage feast with his presence. He was cautioning his hearers against letting a mercenary spirit creep into hospitality, the idea that it will be well to ask So and So to dinner, because he can do something to our advantage in return.

Also, Jesus laid emphasis on the fact that the cost of an entertainment has nothing whatever to do with the richness of the hospitality. What he said about the cup of cold water, given in his name, settles that. The saying in Proverbs (15:17) "Better is a dinner of herbs, where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith" proves the idea to have been no new one at that time, however slow the world has been to make it fashionable. Our New England Puritans put it in this way: "Brown bread and the gospel is good fare."

You have already found out how true this is. We love to enter some houses, while there are others whose thresholds we never cross willingly.

In the first we feel surrounded by an atmosphere of welcome; in the second we cannot help suspecting our hosts of being indifferent, even if they do not cast secret glances at the clock, longing for the moment of our departure. And it is not always in the finest house that the welcome is warmest,—or in the house where most is ostensibly done for our entertainment. We may feel the truest hospitality of spirit when nothing whatever is being done for us in a material way.

The third definition of hospitality given by the dictionary reads: “Figuratively, to be generous in mind, free in receiving and entertaining what is presented to the mind.” Though this definition has to do with ideas it is equally true of material things. If we are generous in our mind toward our friends we shall be so anxious to share with them what we have that the act of sharing and *enjoying together* will be the thing that counts, until it quite dwarfs the size and price of the stalled ox, and exalts the brown loaf to a place of great dignity. Let us get this into our minds and keep it there: *The real factor in hospitality is the spirit in which it is offered, not the materials we use in offering it.* And let us remember also that the guest has duties as well as the host.

As for receiving new ideas into our minds, Paul gave very good advice when he wrote, “Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.” (I Thess. 5: 21) It is only the bigot who knows it all; and the laziest of all lazy persons is the one who will not take

the trouble to think a thing out and decide whether it is good or bad. We should receive a strange idea hospitably and treat it with the utmost courtesy; but if we find it transgressing the law of a guest's behavior, it is an enemy in disguise, and should be treated like an enemy and cast out. To be liberal in religion is to be ready to consider new ideas, and not to accept them unless proved true and good.

(8) Peter, who knew such a lot about human nature, urged Christians to "Use hospitality one to another without grudging."

True hospitality means giving of our very best. In material things it does NOT mean giving the cup of cold water just because it will "do," or is "good enough" for the person in question, when we are able to offer something better which is more suitable to the occasion. Sometimes it is in immaterial matters that Peter's injunction is the hardest to follow. We do not grudge our friends food or drink—they are welcome to all we have—but we are tired; it is an effort to enter into their state of mind, to rejoice with them that rejoice and sorrow with those in trouble. Yet without sympathy there can be no true hospitality.

That is what Paul meant when he talked about being "all things to all men." He could never have affected people as he did had he not been full of sympathy. He quite unconsciously "gave away" the secret of his immense influence when he wrote to his friends in Corinth "I will very gladly spend and

be spent for you." (II Cor. 12: 15) Giving one's self is the centre and essence of hospitality.

SUGGESTIONS

HOSPITALITY AMONG THE PANGWES OF CENTRAL AFRICA. "These have been from time immemorial the most incorrigible cannibals in the world, yet the most industrious and certainly the most intelligent of any of the Ban-to races of Central Africa. In the matter of the capture of strangers and travelers for eating, they formerly had a strange code of honor which saved the lives of many a victim. If one sought refuge or shelter in a village, one was as safe as if the inhabitants were one's own people. They regarded him as sacred so long as he called their village his home. They considered him a member of the family, which, with its ramifications, composed one or more villages. He was still in no danger if he went into the forest, provided he did so by consent of the chief, and expressly stated that he still considered the village his real and continuous home, to which he would shortly return. But if he departed from the village for permanent residence elsewhere, he returned immediately to the status of a wild animal in their eyes, and was the lawful property of any one who found him, subject to capture without any of the protection he formerly enjoyed."

—R. L. Garner, *Adventures in Central Africa.*

ENTERTAINING ANGELS UNAWARES. The old fairy-tale of the witch-like person who turns into a beautiful benefactress tells this truth in another form.

Remind the class that beautiful and lasting impressions come to us at most unexpected moments. Ask them to recall the moment when the beauty of out-of-doors first dawned upon them. Part of the class, if not all, will have a very definite recollection of the instant and of what they were doing.

Remind them that casual meetings are often the beginnings of long and valued friendships. Point out the necessity for keeping our minds open and hospitable, ready for such possibilites.

HOSPITALITY AMONG THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS. Even the heathen admired them for the thorough and conscientious manner in which they performed this duty. "Believers scarce ever went without letters of communion which testified to the purity of their faith; this was sufficient to procure their reception in all those places where the name of Jesus Christ was known." —Alexander Cruden.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

Hospitality from the points of view of host and guest.

Should one wish to receive it from all kinds of people, or from all kinds of houses?

How, with changing conditions of life, changes necessarily come in ideas of hospitality.

What is it going to mean in the future? Justice, perhaps?

LESSON MOTTOES

"A kind word can warm thee, for three winter months."

"Get acquainted with your neighbor—you might like him."—Rev. B. Tieney.

"Be polite; perhaps your family won't mind if you practice on them."

"Go often to the house of thy friend, for weeds choke up the unused path."—Scandinavian.

QUESTIONS, LESSON XXXIII

1.

The lesson is to be about hospitality. Please bring us the dictionary definition of the word.

2.

Genesis 18: 2-8 gives a picture of Old Testament hospitality. Tell us about it, or, if you prefer, read us the passage.

3.

What does Hebrews 13: 2 say about entertaining strangers?

4.

We hear a great deal about the "laws of hospitality." Do you think these laws are binding upon guests as well as hosts?

In the story told in the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis, Abraham's servant refuses to do a certain thing until he has told his errand. Can you explain why?

5.

In the early Christian church hospitality was considered a very important virtue. Can you tell us why they made such a point of it?

6.

Paul had some warm and very hospitable friends. How many of them can you recall?

7.

In the fourteenth chapter of Luke you will find what Jesus said about hospitality. What do you think these words mean?

8.

What do you think is meant in I Peter 4:9 by the words, "Use hospitality one to another without grudging"?

LESSON XXXIV.

WORKS AND FAITH

(Hebrews, chapters 11 and 12; James 2 : 14-20)

The condensation of these passages of the *Soul of the Bible*, pp. 486-488 and 492, is excellent.

How are we to tell the difference between a bad man and a good one? Not by the color of his hair; he may be entirely bald. Not necessarily by what he says, for he and we may use different dictionaries. By the kind of thing he does we judge his state of mind: yet that is not an entirely safe guide either. He may be very bad, yet do many good deeds from unworthy motives. Or, he may be good at heart and still do something decidedly wicked. "By their fruits ye shall know them" is true of a lifetime, not of a single act.

The problem is very complicated; and the best we can do in judging our neighbor is to remember how much better our own intentions are than our acts would lead anybody to suppose! This should not only make us humble, but, in judging ourselves, very ready to echo Wordsworth's prayer: "The best of what we do and are, just God, forgive!"

Faith, which finds its expression in action, is in itself more wonderful than any good deed, being the motive power which prompts such actions. Some people are too shy to assert that they have

faith in God. They may think they are too skeptical. They may prefer to call it *faith in permanent good*. Both mean belief in the *worth-whileness* of doing right, and a firm conviction that good will triumph in the end, no matter what happens to any individual, or even to the immediate enterprise he has at heart.

People who carry that belief about with them seem to radiate a good influence. They may not be doing anything! It is comforting and healing merely to find ourselves in their presence. To keep enough of this assurance on hand to serve our needs it is necessary to rely upon something outside ourselves. We are not unlike one of those storage batteries used in an electric car. When it has been charged, and the proper key is turned, it can run wherever we direct it; but every little while we must have the charge renewed. That act too is called by many names, all of which mean the same thing,—drawing help and inspiration from the fountain of all good. Perhaps that is what Paul meant in Ephesians (4: 23) when he wrote “Be renewed in the spirit of your mind.” Let us call it by the simple old-fashioned word Faith.

The more of it we can get into our lives the better it will be for ourselves and the world, for, if such faith be genuine, it will almost inevitably flower into good deeds of itself; just as the outline of the vase we tried to draw a few Sundays ago came right after we ceased dwelling upon it as an outline and bent all our energies to getting a correct picture

of the mass that lay between the outlines.

To run about the world hunting for spectacular good deeds to do would be very much like keeping our minds exclusively on the outline. A man who did this might be very good, but he would not be effective, and he would be more than a little ridiculous. Perhaps some of you have already read *Don Quixote*. If so, you will know what I mean. He is a very lovable character, and astonishingly real for a character in fiction; but people laugh at him; and that seems a pity when we are talking about a thing like faith.

Neither St. Paul, nor Joan of Arc, nor any of the heroic figures of history are to be laughed at. They were intent upon their mission, and their deeds and adventures came about naturally as incidents of the quest in which they were engaged, not as the main cause of their endeavors.

Paul's attitude toward Faith has been expressed in this way:

"Let us note one other mighty service of this remarkable man. He deepened the inner life of Christendom and made its piety more profound. The tendency of both Jewish and Gentile converts was to win God's favor by *doing something* that they thought religious. They performed a rite; they uttered holy words; they purified themselves with water; they made an offering in the temple; and so on, and fancied that this external act made them more pleasing to God. Against this Paul forever insists that religion is from within. . . . Paul, as a

rule, scorns all rites and works; for they cannot sanctify a man, and with all the ardor of his nature he summons Christians to a deep and thoughtful devotion, to a solid and real sonship to God and resemblance to the Lord."

[—Wm. Laurence Sullivan,
From the Gospel to the Creeds.]

Paul had himself been a Pharisee, and knew both by experience and observation the danger of relying solely upon works! There is grave danger, however, of going too far in the other direction. Time and again in the world's history people have become mightily concerned about saving their own souls, and have made themselves and many others unhappy by trying to prepare themselves for a future life. Engrossed in this they have not seemed to care what happened to them in this life, provided they could make sure of a place in heaven. Nor have they seemed to care in the least about what happened meanwhile to their unfortunate neighbors. It was against this attitude that James protested when he wrote:

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead." (James 2: 14-17)

Applied to ourselves we can reduce the problem to a very concrete one of getting and spending. To get money in order to keep it is miserly. To spend wisely is economy. To spend wisely for the good of others, is benefaction. This applies quite as truly to spiritual wealth as to dollars and cents. We cannot well get along without it. We are powerless to "make" it within ourselves. If we are wise, we shall use it generously when we have it.

One kind of faith of which we stand in great need is confidence in ourselves. Not conceit,—for that would be as objectionable as counterfeit coin, and as stupid as imagining we could mint it in our own persons; but faith in our ability to stand up for the right; to train and use the minds God has given us, and with his help to prove faithful to whatever trust he and our fellow men may repose in us.

Let us use what remains of the lesson period in talking about men and women who have worked "not grudgingly or of necessity" for the good of their fellows, and have shown by their actions the faith and love that were in them.

SUGGESTIONS

ASK THE CLASS FOR A DEFINITION OF FAITH. This makes an effective opening for the lesson, and may bring out some illuminating points,—or some points that need illumination. Show that it is harder and much more tiresome to keep on living up to a standard of high principles than to die in a burst of heroic enthusiasm.

LAST PART OF LESSON. In order to insure variety in the biographical examples brought in for discussion, assign to each member of the class a different type of individual. For example: A great religious leader. A fearless statesman. A devoted physician. A general. An explorer. An artist. A nurse. A scientist or inventor. Read the list to the class, and, so far as possible, let the young people choose the ones they prefer.

LESSON MOTTOES

“Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou liv’st, live well.” —Milton.

“How am I to know if I am a true Christian?” a lady once asked Mr. Moody at the close of a revival meeting. Mr. Moody is said to have replied: ‘Ask your servants, madam; *they* are sure to know.’ ”

“Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us dare to do our duty as we understand it.”

—Abraham Lincoln.

“Faith working through love.” Paul, in Gal. 5: 6.

QUESTIONS, LESSON XXXIV

1.

Please come prepared to tell us about some physician who had faith in the right, and in his own ability; and because of this was able to accomplish great things.

2.

Please come prepared to tell us about some religious leader who had faith in the right, and in his (or her) own

ability; and because of this was able to accomplish great things.

3.

Please come prepared to tell us about some statesman who had faith in the right, and in his own ability; and because of this was able to accomplish great things.

4.

Please come prepared to tell us about some general who had faith in the right, and in his own ability; and because of this was able to accomplish great things.

5.

Please come prepared to tell us about some explorer who had faith in the right, and in his own ability; and because of this was able to accomplish great things.

6.

Please come prepared to tell us about some artist who had faith in the right, and in his (or her) own ability; and because of this was able to accomplish great things.

7.

Please come prepared to tell us about some nurse who had faith in the right, and in his (or her) own ability; and because of this was able to accomplish great things.

8.

Please come prepared to tell us about some scientist who had faith in the right, and in his (or her) own ability; and because of this was able to accomplish great things.

LESSON XXXV

LOVE WITHOUT HYPOCRISY

(Romans 12:9-21; I Cor. 13)

The boy of eleven who confided to his mother: “This job of being a Christian is the hardest one *I* was ever up against!” was not far wrong. There is no eight-hour day about it. And it is not only protracted, but exciting and puzzling, for the reason that we seem to be expected to do so many different and contradictory things at once. We are told that we should love all our fellow men; yet we are also told to hate evil. Even a fool knows that some people are wicked. How can a Christian love the wicked? Again we are enjoined to be absolutely truthful; and in the next breath courteous behavior is urged upon us. How can we be always courteous without sometimes being hypocritical,—pretending to be friendly and amiable when in our hearts we feel quite the other way? St. Paul wrote in Romans (12: 9) “Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.” He seems to be of the opinion that hypocrite and Christian are two words which do not go together.

Let us see what Jesus has to say about Christian conduct: for it is well when in doubt to go to the

highest authority. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. . . . For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? . . . Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5: 43-48) We are nowhere told that God is a hypocrite; and we are told that God is Love. There must be a reconciling answer somewhere. Again, in John (13: 35) Jesus is quoted as saying: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." You remember that a lawyer once asked Jesus, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" and he answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Matt. 22: 36-39) Perhaps the answer is right here. It may be that this is another case where we have to look very hard at the problem with *our minds* in order to distinguish between essentials and what are after all only unessential and apparently contradictory details.

First and foremost, it is the Christian's duty to be true. We may compare truth to a beautiful great diamond cut with many facets. Some of these surfaces look east and some look west. Some reflect

the light so that it comes to us the color of flame; others send it back a brilliant blue. Yet we know that these are all mere surfaces,—the outside of one jewel, whose heart is pure white, more dazzling than any of these brilliant colors.

Keeping this in mind let us go back to that saying of Paul's "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good," and let us read what follows, turning it as we go into short words of our own.

| | |
|---|--|
| In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another. | Cultivate kindly feelings. |
| In diligence not slothful. | Do not be lazy. |
| Fervent in spirit; serving the Lord. | Be enthusiastic. |
| Rejoicing in hope. | Be optimistic. |
| Patient in tribulation. | Be patient when things go wrong. |
| Continuing steadfast in prayer. | Believe that a greater power than yourself is working on your side, so long as you work for good. Seek help from it. |

| | |
|---|--|
| Communicating to the necessities of the saints. | Be helpful. |
| Given to hospitality. | Be hospitable. |
| Bless them that persecute you; bless and curse not. | Do not be vindictive. |
| Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep. | Be sympathetic. |
| Be of the same mind, one toward another. | Do not be argumentative. |
| Set not your mind on high things but condescend to things that are lowly. | Do not be a snob. |
| Be not wise in your own conceits. | Do not think you "know it all." |
| Render to no man evil for evil. | Do not be resentful. |
| Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men. | Be willing to give up a little for the sake of setting a good example. |
| If it be possible, as much as in you lies be at peace with all men. | Do not seek a quarrel but stand up for the right. |

Avenge not yourselves beloved, but give place unto wrath; for it is written Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord.

But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink; for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.

Be not overcome of evil; but overcome evil with good.

Do not try to "get even."

Instead, act so generously that your adversary will be ashamed of himself.

Win out by doing good.

That is a large contract, as our small boy truly said, but there does not seem to be much hypocrisy in it after all. Love seems to be the foundation from start to finish. Paul appeared to think so too, for in that place in Galatians (5: 22) where he says that the "fruit" of the spirit is "love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith" and so on, you will notice that love comes first on the list. In Philippians 1: 9 he writes: "This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment." It is a quality which grows with use and experience and is not to be exercised without "judgment."

We cannot exercise judgment without using the mind; so here we are back again at the words spoken

by Jesus about loving with the mind as well as with the heart and the soul. It all seems to come to this: that if we put the test of our minds upon a problem of this sort, we can usually distinguish between surface contradictions and the real heart of the matter.

Just as a crude illustration, let us imagine coming into a room and seeing a baby we love in the act of climbing out along a window-ledge high above the ground. It would not be showing much love if we let him go on doing the dangerous thing he wants to do; but we would not be showing any common sense whatever if we shouted out our displeasure in a way to startle him. If we did so he would most likely lose his hold and fall then and there. We stand a much better chance of saving him if we conceal our fears and go about it gently—nobody will call that hypocrisy.

Paul's most eloquent words about love, among the most beautiful words in the whole Bible, are those in the 13th chapter of First Corinthians. Let us read them together.

SUGGESTIONS

HYPOCRITE. It may interest the class to be reminded that hypocrite is the Greek word for play-actor. Some old meanings of the word are: mimic; one who accompanies the delivery of an actor by gestures; a pretender; a player; one who assumes a false appearance; plays a part; feigns to be what

he is not, or to feel or believe what he does not actually feel or believe; more especially "a false pretender to piety or virtue."

EVERYDAY MANNERS. Give people the benefit of the doubt. As an example of how not to tell the truth, cite the outspoken lady who went to make a duty-visit upon her relations. Such visits were always a strain on both sides. The relatives, doing their best to be friendly, led her into the library and proudly exhibited a new bookcase which they had long desired.

The visitor gave it one glance. "Yes. Hideous, isn't it?" she said, and turned away.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER OF FIRST CORINTHIANS. If the young people are to learn this as their contribution to the closing exercises, it may make it easier to commit to memory if it be copied in the form of free verse, in four stanzas, beginning respectively, "Though I speak," "Love suffereth long," "Love never faileth," and "When I was a child."

HYMNS. There is a chance in this lesson to refer to and possibly to read some of the old familiar hymns such as: "Love divine, all love excelling";

"The King of love my Shepherd is"; and
"O love that wilt not let me go."

LESSON MOTTOES

"Let us not love in word, neither with the tongue, but in deed and truth." —I John 3:18.

"He prayeth well who loveth well,
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

—Coleridge: "Ancient Mariner."

QUESTIONS, LESSON XXXV

Read Romans 12: 9-21 and then write out in your own words eight items of a Code of Conduct that you would be willing to try to live by.

We will compare them in class and see whether we would be willing to live by the code any of the others write. Also, how near we come to the standard set by Paul, who had great love for his fellow men, and was not a hypocrite.

LESSON XXXVI

DEATH OF PETER AND PAUL

One would suppose that the apostles who had known Jesus personally and had been trained by him would have been objects of the greatest interest and reverence to the other Christians, and that everything they said and did would have been written down and treasured and handed on from generation to generation.

But the ways of God are very different from the ways of men. As a matter of fact we know nothing whatever about the after history of nine out of the eleven who followed Jesus up to the time of his death. They are not mentioned again. We hear of John occasionally, usually as a silent companion of Peter. By gleaning everything possible from the gospels and from the book of Acts, and piecing this out with the two epistles traditionally ascribed to Peter, we think we know a good deal about him. We do learn something about his life, and more about his character; but as to the manner of his death we have only tradition. The same is true of Paul, though he had nearly a whole book written about him. The work of these great teachers "passed into history largely as an impersonal force" says Gilbert.

Perhaps that is God's way of teaching us that

work is of far more importance than any individual; for we find the same lesson repeated wherever we look. In nature the coral insects build their little bit of reef and die; but others take their place and the reef endures, and grows until it makes a harbor in which great ships may lie in safety through a storm. In history characters appear, do great and daring things, and pass out of the memory of the men who applauded them, long before they pass out of life. This was the case in our own history with Lewis and Clark, those young army officers who were the first white Americans to cross this continent from sea to sea.

But to return to Peter and Paul. It is believed that they perished about the same time, during Nero's cruel reign. (1) We know that Paul's trial was delayed for at least two years after he reached Rome. The reason may have been that his accusers desired to gather other evidence against him, and to bring witnesses from a distance. With travel as difficult as it was upon the Mediterranean during eight months of the year, the delay is not as strange as at first appears. Possibly his appeal to Cæsar was not a safe subject for correspondence, and that this accounts for the lack of records concerning it. Some maintain that Paul was released after this first captivity in Rome and traveled again; that he may even have fulfilled his cherished desire to go to Spain, before another arrest and imprisonment ended in martyrdom. The final outcome, however, was only a matter of time.

All that we can be sure of is that he did his work faithfully as long as he was permitted to live, and died cheerfully when his time came. (2) Paul believed with the Psalmist that "unto God the Lord belong the issues from death." (Ps. 68:20) (3) "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" he wrote the Philippians (1:21) "Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all." (Phil. 2:17) He knew that he had been faithful to the trust reposed in him, and that nothing else mattered. (4) In the days when the second epistle to Timothy was believed to have been written by Paul, it was sometimes called Paul's last will and testament. Whoever wrote the words: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course; I have kept the faith," expressed Paul's great spirit. (4:7) So too did the words "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." (II Tim. 4:6)

(5) According to tradition he met his death at Tre Fontane, about three miles south of Rome on the Ostian Way, which we see from the map parallels the more famous Appian Way. It is believed that he was beheaded.

The traditions about Peter are more picturesque. (6) He also was willing to leave the whole matter in the hands of God. "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good," asks I Peter 3:13. Peter was impulsive, and the story runs that he fled down the Appian Way when the danger of crucifixion grew very near. As he

was fleeing he met a vision of Jesus who stopped and questioned him: "Whither goest thou, Peter?" "I flee from death, Lord; whither goest thou?" "I go up to Rome to be crucified." Whereupon Peter turned back to meet death, so repentant that he begged to be crucified head downward, deeming it too great an honor to die in the same manner that Jesus had died.

Both Peter and Paul were great, whole-souled men. Peter seems the more lovable of the two; and offers a more encouraging example to many of us, not because he was impulsive, and was constantly stumbling into sin, but that, repentant but undiscouraged, he picked himself up and climbed out of it and continued on his way. But Paul is a very human and inspiring person also, strong, fearless, straight-thinking, devoted, energetic, persistent, yet sympathetic, and liberal-minded to a degree which few of his day and faith could approach, and which not many who have the benefit of his example can emulate. Dr. Sullivan calls him "one of those knights and noblemen of God, who are stern in meeting duty, but quick to give affection; who are unwilling to cause pain to others, yet are resolved at any cost to be true to conscience."

Think of all he renounced when he made his great decision. Think of his long weary waiting at Tarsus, and of the long years of his ministry, handicapped by ill health. We must not say weary years of ministry, for his soul was never weary in his

work, no matter how much his body may have suffered. Steadfast years would be a better expression, for he was constantly enjoining steadfastness, and showing the need for endurance, with a persistence which hints that he knew by personal experience how much such advice would be needed.

With his endurance and his energy; the long marches he actually made, and his frequent use of the imagery of war in his references to soldiers and to armor, he has come to be looked upon as the type of Christianity moving forward to conquer. The lesson his life teaches is that suffering does not matter, that length or shortness of days does not matter, provided one's face is always toward the goal and the goal is worth striving for. He shows us that a prisoner in a just cause is freer than an unrighteous king. (7) "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain." (I Cor. 15: 58) (8) "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." (Gal. 5: 1)

This was indeed faith, of the kind we tried to define a Sunday or two ago; and the way in which his own example has carried its message through the ages goes far to prove to doubting men that mind and spirit are indeed the real and enduring things.

"Life must be measured by thought and action, not by time," wrote Sir John Lubbock. And an-

other has reminded us that for the hero there can be no tragedy, since the only real tragedy is the breaking down of moral purpose.

SUGGESTIONS

USE MAP OF ROME, also photographs.

PASSING INTO HISTORY AS AN IMPERSONAL FORCE.
Dr. Hale's poem, "All Souls" beginning "What was his name? I do not know his name. I only know he heard God's voice and came" expressed this in regard to our American forefathers. The poem may be found in Dr. Hale's collected works, and in *Apples of Gold* by Mrs. Clara Bancroft Beatley, p. 167.

PETER'S EXAMPLE.

"But noble souls, through dust and heat,
Rise from disaster and defeat
The stronger;
And conscious still of the divine
Within them, lie on earth supine
No longer."
—Longfellow, "The Sifting of Peter."

MEMORIAL DAY. If this lesson is used near the Memorial Day anniversary, any local celebration may be referred to and utilized in pointing out the parallel between the soldiers who have laid down their lives for country and these men who died for their faith.

LESSON MOTTO

“Wherever through the ages rise
The altars of self-sacrifice ;
Where love its arms hath opened wide,
Or man for men has calmly died ;
I see the same white wings outspread
That hovered o'er the Master's head.”

—Whittier, “Miriam.”

QUESTIONS, LESSON XXXVI

1.

Tell us what you remember we found out about the difficulties of sailing the Mediterranean in winter, in Paul's time.

2.

Recite to us verse 20 of the Sixty-eighth Psalm ; and bring some other quotation expressing the same idea. It need not be from the Bible.

3.

Paul's attitude toward living and dying is expressed in Philippians, 1: 21. Please read it to us. And also Phil. 2: 17.

4.

Recite to us II Timothy 4: 7, and bring some other quotation expressing the same idea.

5.

Show us upon the map of Rome the Ostian and the Appian Ways.

6.

Please recite to us I Peter 3:13.

7.

Please recite I Cor. 15: 58.

8.

Please recite Gal. 5: 1.

LESSON XXXVII

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH 64-100 A.D. AND LATER

At the time Jesus died, his disciples and followers were a very small band of men and women in a very small country. By the time Paul died, the Christian church had spread until it was a force to be reckoned with on all shores of the Mediterranean, and practically throughout the civilized world of that day.

Although there were other eminent teachers after Paul and his group passed away, doctrines and writings soon became of greater importance than mere individuals, and the Gospels, the Revelation of John, and other notable books were written.

The church has had many great leaders since Paul, but not one who has influenced it to the same extent. One reason for this, aside from Paul's earnestness and strong personality, was the mere increase of the church in size. That of itself brought complications and even changed the nature of the problems with which it was confronted. A moment's thought will make this clear.

One man, alone, on a desert island, can do as he will.

Two people can get along together with very few rules.

A family of ten has to have more rules and to follow them more strictly, in order to live in peace and comfort.

A church numbering 200 must have officers, as the early Christians found.

A town of 20,000 has to have many regulations.

A country of many million inhabitants needs still other kinds of law.

Even during Paul's day new problems arose in the church because of its increasing numbers. These he met, in his character of great leader and teacher, answering questions, expounding, directing; striving always to make clear the distinction between rules and observances which after all were unimportant, and the great central simple truth that God is God of the Hebrew and Gentile alike, a loving Father to all his children.

There is a constant tendency, in religion as elsewhere, away from the simple toward the complex. We studied this in the religion of the Hebrews, whose early belief was in a tribal God; then in the God of a nation made up of different tribes, and later still in a God who had dealings with a countless number of individuals. Last of all, the worship of Jehovah hardened into the ritualism of the Pharisees with its many burdensome rules of conduct.

The teachings of Jesus threw off this crust of empty observances to lay stress upon our nearness to God, and consequently upon our responsibility toward our brother men. He opened a path toward God to even the humblest soul, and made it so plain

and simple that a child could understand and follow it.

But people love mystery,—particularly uneducated people. There was, indeed there still is, a feeling that so precious and wonderful a thing as religion must be hedged about by all sorts of difficulties and be very hard to attain; that there must be some sort of magic and hocus-pocus about it. So people manufacture mystery where there is none, instead of recognizing the beauty and mystery of simple things as very wise folk do. It is well said that “a little knowledge is a dangerous thing.”

Through all the long centuries of church history the tendency has been to overlay the simple truth which Jesus taught with a mass of explanations, some of which do not explain. Even Paul did this to a certain extent, for already in his epistles matters are discussed that Jesus either ignored entirely or treated as of minor importance.

As such a mass of explanation accumulates, the central truth becomes so covered up that in time it seems in danger of being quite lost. But always in the past, when the critical moment has been reached, a great reformer has arisen to clear away the rubbish and point out the simple truth again, as Jesus did; as Paul did; and as the greatest teachers since Paul’s day have done.

We may venture to say that religion is this warm vital central truth, while theology is the mass of well-meant explanation men have raised around it.

Considered merely as history, the history of the

Christian church is wonderfully rich and picturesque and varied. It may be likened to a great cathedral, which has been rising slowly through hundreds of years, inspired by one idea, but with ever-changing architects and styles of building.

Following out this figure, the foundations would be in the age of persecution, during which the Christians were hunted from place to place, and had to live under ground, carrying on in the darkness their worship and devotion. When, about 325 A.D., the Emperor Constantine accepted Christianity, their sudden release from dread of such persecution must have been like coming up out of the earth into sunshine. The foundations of the cathedral were finished. But it proved merely a change of problem; the walls had yet to be laid. Centuries of controversy followed,—a season of endless discussion and argument, and not a little fighting about questions of doctrine.

From time to time Ecumenical Councils, as general assemblies of church dignitaries were called, came together in efforts toward compromise and agreement. This might be likened to hewing the stones out of which the cathedral was being built into the same general shape and size, so that its walls should stand firm and true.

Indeed, the first of these Councils had been held in Jerusalem before Paul set out on his second missionary journey. You remember it was there he won his victory over those conservative people who thought that only good Jews should be eligible

to membership in the new church. Another famous gathering was the one at Nicæ in 325, presided over by no less a personage than Constantine himself. The question then was the exact relationship of Christ to God. As God's son could he be equal with him in power? The Nicene Creed, still repeated in many churches, was formulated at a later council, probably well along in the 4th Century. There was an Ecumenical Council in Constantinople in 381, one in Ephesus in 431; one in Chalcedon in 451; with still more in the following centuries.

Each of these councils was occupied with questions which seemed of supreme importance at the time, but which later generations cannot regard in the same light, because the church has already reached and passed beyond that particular stage of development. You recall Paul's "When I was a child I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child."

Temporal politics enter into the story of the church, because, no matter how much man may try to consider religion a thing by itself, it is in reality a part of his very life, and as such colors his everyday acts. Through many centuries the history of the church became the history of the development of modern Europe. Of America as well, for the new continent entered into the story with the earliest Spanish and French explorers, who brought priests with them to Christianize the Indians. Then came our own forefathers, intent on religious freedom.

We, as their descendants, have our part in the story too. Religion and the church are not at all the same thing; but the church is what our religion makes it. Each of us has his own task, small though it may be, in building the great edifice. In this work the young people must take the places of older ones as they drop out; and the building they do will be beautiful and lasting just in proportion as they bring to it the clearest thinking of which their brains are capable, and the most loyal devotion that is in their hearts.

When we remember Paul, he looms very large in the church as master-builder. It has been said that Jesus gave us the Christian religion, and that without Paul we should not have had the Christian Church. Whether this is true or not, he laid mighty foundations. We honor him for it; but most of all for the kind of man he was; noble, loyal, generous, and absolutely true to his belief that God is the Father of all races of men.

SUGGESTIONS

MAP. Refer again to the map used in the very first lesson.

"FROM THE SIMPLE TO THE COMPLEX." In school the members of the class have probably had elementary biology. Some common illustration may be used.

BEAUTY AND MYSTERY OF SIMPLE THINGS. To illustrate, use any complicated article made by

man, such as a watch, and compare it with some apparently simple flower, like the daisy, when seen under the microscope.

CATHEDRALS. York is a good one to use as an example of changing styles in architecture, since it begins with a Saxon crypt. Point out the different styles; that some are not so good as those they replace, but that all were used in the pious belief that a more glorious temple was to result from the change. Photographs are easy to obtain. The little pamphlet devoted to York in Bell's Cathedral Series is small and convenient in size, yet contains many illustrations.

CATACOMBS. The teacher who has a memory of his or her visit to the catacombs of Rome may draw upon it to good advantage.

CONSTANTINE. Devote a few moments to the contrasts in his character. His recognition of the flaming sign in the sky at midday. Yet he executed his wife and son without a qualm.

LEADERS WHO WERE TRUE TO THE FAITH. "If there is time to dwell on individuals, Luther's splendid reply at his trial must not be forgotten.

"Since you seek a plain answer, I will give it without horns or teeth. Except I am convinced by holy scripture, or some evident proof—for I trust neither Pope nor Council—I am bound by the scriptures by me cited. I cannot retract, and I will not retract, anything; for against the conscience it is neither safe nor sound to act." He said this in

Latin, the language in which his trial was being conducted. Then, breaking into his mother tongue he added, "Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me! Amen."

PERIODS PICTURESQUE ALIKE IN CHURCH AND SECULAR HISTORY.

Holy Roman Empire—800–1500.

Crusades—about 200 years—1095–1291.

Founding of the great religious orders.

The Inquisition.

The Reformation.

LESSON MOTTOES

"One, with God, is a majority."

"Long is the way, and hard, that out of hell leads up to God." —Milton.

"This that never ends,
Still climbing, luring fancy still to climb;
As full of morals half divined as life.
· · · · ·

Your blood is mine, ye architects of dream,
Builders of aspiration, incomplete.
Nay, did Faith build this wonder? or did Fear
That makes a fetish and misnames it God?
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Today's eternal truth Tomorrow proved
Frail as frost-landscapes on a window-pane,
Meanwhile thou smiledst.
The climbing instinct was enough for thee."
—Lowell, "The Cathedral."

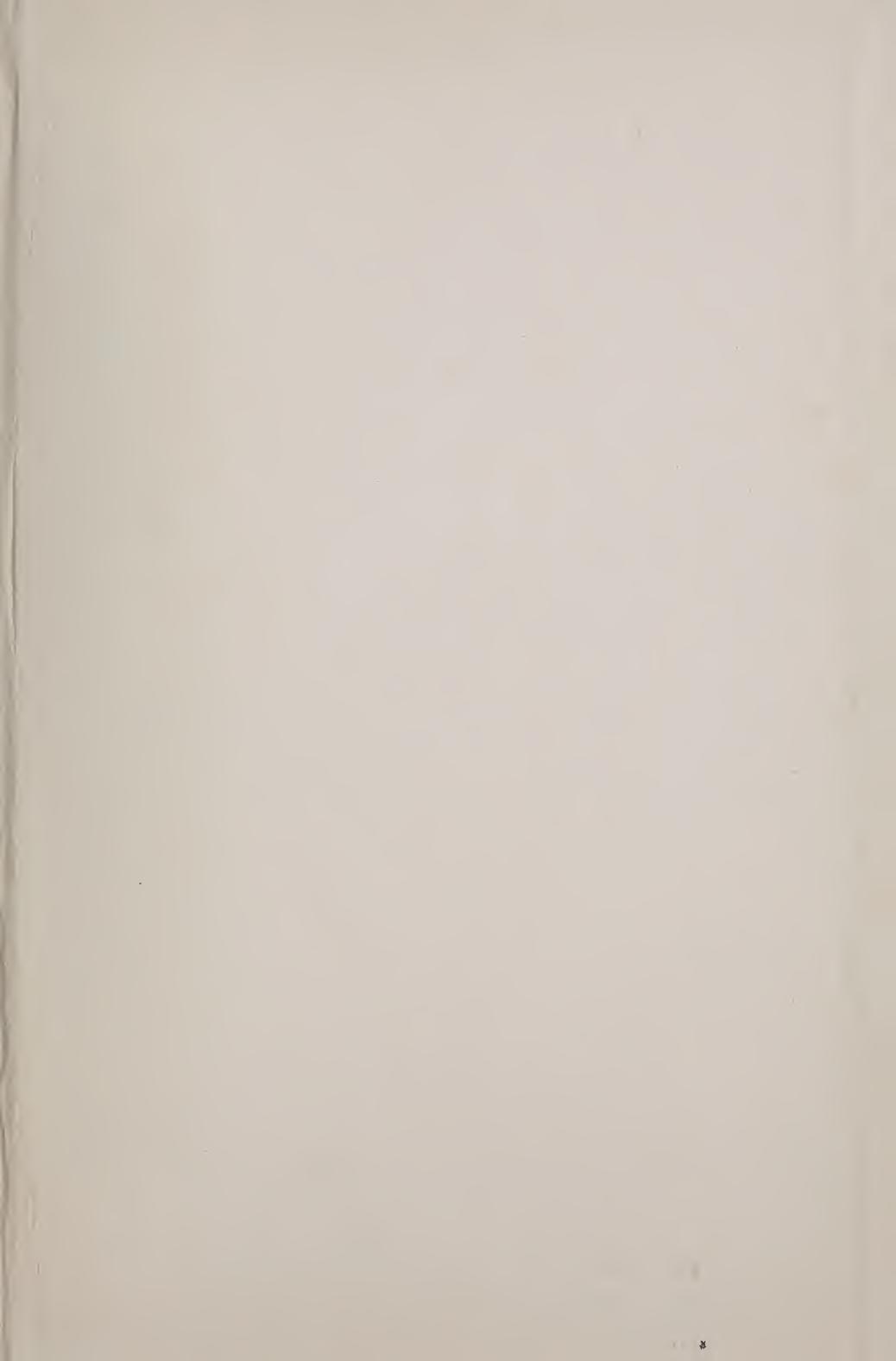
QUESTION, LESSON XXXVII

No lesson question has been appended, on the assumption that the class will be busy preparing for whatever part it may have to take in the closing exercises of the school.

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: June 2005

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